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SKETCH-BOOK: A-N-

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ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY
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14019

The poor exile
Feels, in each action of the varied day,
His doom of banishment. The very air
Cools not his brow as in his native land;
The scene is strange, the food is loathly to him;
The language, nay, the music, jars his ear.

WALTER SCOTT.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

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X e 3



INDIA, the land of enchantment,—the treasure-house from which imagination culls its brightest images of splendour,—the “golden orient,” glittering in the best brilliance of sun and song,—peopled by the creations of “The Arabian Nights,”—the Chersonese, abounding “in gold and silver, and all manner of precious stones,”—land of promise and hope !

What a vintage seems in the perspective to invite the hand of the reaper ! Its fragrance is wafted over hills and oceans, and there are reapers also who have gathered and tasted, and found the harvest—dust and ashes !

We have enough of the blessed sunshine to wither away the flowers of life, and, palsy the

best energies of the mind,—and we have wherewithal to eat and drink with what appetite we may.

One can almost hear the ebbing of the waves of time as they roll heavily and sultrily away. Yet what a field for the exercise of a laudable curiosity is spread out around us ! Strange, wonderful in their unchangeableness, is the race amidst whom we dwell ! We wander, as it were, amongst the patriarchs of ancient days ;—we travel back three thousand years into the past,—we are contemporaries of the ages that entombed the Pharaohs. The “oxen tread out the corn around us,” and “the camels go to water at the well,” and “two women are grinding corn at the mill ;” and familiarity makes us forget that these things were thus when the steward of Abraham first met the fair Rebekah at even-tide, on his journey for the bride of his master’s heir.

Therefore,—the fiend *ennui* glaring horribly from the opposite corner of my little writing-table,—the *cacoethes scribendi* being full on me,—the very silence of the air tempting to

contemplation, and to the delightful wandering of unfettered thought,—to airy projects of some work of fancy that may not be all unworthy of this Augustan æra—; therefore will I also essay to be “one of the Prophets.”

What, then, shall I write? “Ay, there’s the rub!” A series of “Essays on the Statistics, Economy, Political and Moral, of British India, &c.?” Pshaw!—the dear Public never read such things now-a-days; THE COURT have no desire that the secrets of Eastern diplomacy should be revealed, and the few are more deeply initiated than I am. Besides, who writes for the few? A novel—a sketch—a caricature—letters—dramas—why not all?

My hand fell on Milman’s “Belshazzar,” and I read, devoured, and honed to catch the inspiration. What a pity ~~he~~ forgets so often the effects of a visit to the “*Regia Solis!*” In virtue of this forgetfulness I took courage, and dared the plunge. There was the lofty Temple of Bel, with its seven ascending halls, and before me lay the vastness of the deep, the

sepulchral mystery of Kailass. Around me were unnumbered halls; above me the tombs of the mighty who had passed away. I was in the scene of Aurungzebe's story; I was in the world of things unknown, lying beyond the themes of hoary antiquity. I had a Brahmin, too, for a priest; I had a youthful lover, and an enthusiast heroine; and, as I gazed, I warmed into courage, and began.

Scene the First.

Rozah, the summit of the hill that overlooks the vale and village of Ellora.

SIMANDREE.—ELLAMAH.

SIMANDREE.

At my approach how once thy sweet eye beam'd !
 The young gazelle ne'er bounded half so light
 As thou to greet my coming. And thy smile,—
 Thy glad young smile so welcomed my return,
 That often have I torn myself away
 To feel again the bliss of such dear greeting,
 But now, alas ! why is the time so changed ?
 Bright still thou art, and beauteous as yon moon,
 Mine own sweet maid ! but, like that pallid moon,
 Thou wear'st the brightness of some ethereal sphere,
 And so I gaze with terror and with awe,
 And in adoring, tremble !
 As if some shining but impervious veil

Were dropp'd between thy heart and mine, beloved,
 On *thee* its splendour casting,—me its gloom,
 It seems;—as if thoughts, feeling, love, and hope,
 Were no more had in common; but to thee
 Came other thoughts, hopes, feelings, other love,
 And a mysterious joy I knew nor shared.

Thy cold eye even now is fix'd on mine
 With such a passionless and solemn glance,
 So holy, and, O Heaven! so unloving,
 That my whole being thrills as though it were
 A sacrilege to feel for one like thee
 The burning, maddening passion that devours me!
 Thou seemest set apart, and dedicate
 To some unutterable mystery,
 I know not, care not what:—whate'er it be,
 It rends thee from me, and I curse it therefore.
 Accursed be it!

ELLAMAH.

Simahdree, peace!
 I tremble at thy madness! Feel'st thou not—
 But no! thou canst not:—unto me 'tis given
 To know what viewless forms are hovering near,
 And I command thee, peace!

"And thus, you know," continued I to my companion, interrupting his slumber on a neighbouring couch, "the dialogue is to go on, Simahdree inquiring, and doubting, and suspecting, and she mystic and mystifying, until, half in anger, half in fear, he leaves

her, and she soliloquises about the gods, and the spirits, and celestial influence, and the moon, and the stars—”

“ Yes, yes, I understand,” replied my friend ; “ a speech after the most approved model. Well, and what then ? ”

“ Then I shall place the scene in the pillared hall of Kailass. I shall have it dimly illuminated, and I shall bring the High Brahmin and Ellamah into its recesses. After he has assured her that she has been selected by the presiding divinity of the Caves,—you know it is an unsolvable enigma to whom they were originally dedicated, and I have a right to give them poetically to any one of the three crore,—that she has been selected by the presiding divinity, then, for some high and holy purpose,—that the appointed hour approaches, and that she must await alone the revelation of his will :

“ Then we shall have her solitary in the cave which, after a speech of fears from her, is suddenly and brilliantly illuminated. There will be the smell of perfumes too, and ra-

vishing music,* and songs darkly indicating the destiny that awaits her, and a shower of flowers—vide Mahabarat—which will envelope her in wreaths and garlands; and so the scene falls.

"Then we find her on the brow of the steep hill over Kailass,—you remember?"

"Yes, the excellent tiffin we had there, after the very bad breakfast in that cold 'Carpenter's Cave?'"

"Well, never mind that, because hereafter I have something about *that* too. We find Ellamah then on the brow of the moon-lighted hill, and alone, scarcely alive to her situation, beginning to suspect the past and to fear the future. She commences in this strain:

"Why do I feel thus heart-stricken? why burns
 My cheek? Why are mine eyes suffused with tears?
 Why shun the stars, and shrink to meet the moon?
 Have I not done a deed enjoin'd by those
 Who watch o'er mortals, and who did create
 Each for pre-ordin'd destiny? Why I,
 Methinks, should triumph, and should feel
 Almost celestial from the love divine
 Of that supernal power!"

"Poor!" said my companion, curling his lip.

"Oh, it is but the sketch, the skeleton," said I; "its colouring may be heightened and finished. Well, to proceed. Simahdree joins her, and her coldness—her mystery—her half-terrified abstraction, rouse him to deep passion. And presently the chief Brahmin appears. He rebukes Simahdree.

"How dost thou dare awake, with thy rude voice,
The saints who here inhabit? They who live
Entranced in infinite, but that they are
All too absorb'd to heed thy earthly cries,
Might wake the thunders of Almighty wrath,
To overwhelm thy impious audacity."

"Simahdree, not brooking the interruption of the priest, and having, moreover, sundry dark misgivings on the mysterious influence he exercises over Ellamah, replies in indignant anger, and a violent altercation ensues. Ellamah, in terror, endeavours to soothe them to peace; but her lover will not hear of submission, and the priest insists on his humiliation. More and more confirmed in the hor-

rible suspicions that have been floating in his mind, Simahdree rushes from their presence in distraction, and the scene ends.

"Ellamah then appears alone, and holds commune with herself. She is now the prey of doubts which are verging on despair; and between mysticism, love, and dawning remorse, her reason reels. In the midst of these sad communings, Simahdree rushes in, wildly, and with haggard looks. He proclaims aloud his knowledge of the dark stratagems of the priest to effect the ruin of his beloved, and his own destruction, and triumphantly recounts his gratified revenge. He has murdered the priest, and the overburthened brain of Ellamah is immediately inflamed to madness. She invokes the powers of darkness, and precipitates herself from the rock. The lover, frozen with despair, stands in speechless agony, and the curtain falls."

"A most tragic tragedy, and most laughter-moving comedy," said my friend, sarcastically.

I confess I was piqued. "What is the matter with it?" I asked.

"It is altogether monstrous, strange, and unnatural," replied he; then more moderately and seriously he added, "it will not do for such an age as this, believe me. There is nothing Asiatic there but the scene. Where be your tropes and metaphors, your elephant similes, the staple figure of Indian drama? Your love is European love, and your lore is European lore. Where be your gods and goddesses to populate your temples? Go, study Horace, Hayman Wilson's Sanscrit drama, and the Mahabarat, and a hundred volumes on Hindoo mythology. Ellora is virgin-ground to the muse yet, and such a voice as this is all too weak to awake her echoes. Burn that, however: and now, what's next?"

"You know the fate of Kishen Kower?" said I; "now I think of dramatising *her* story. I need not tire you with recounting the incidents."

"Especially as there happens to be a tale extant on the same theme, as none has better

reason to know than yourself; and auto-plagiarisms—" began my friend.

"Oh, true!" replied I, interrupting him. "But then it is allowable to build a drama on the foundations of a tale, you know. And because a subject of historical interest has been maltreated *one* way, there is no reason why it should not be maltreated in another, is there? I have only one or two detached speeches, for the plot is ready laid. And besides, I should so like to consign Ameer Khan to the infamy the wretch deserves, and the tale to which you allude, has made an omission of all that bears on that atrocious murderer.—Come, *do* hear this fragment of a dialogue between that Roman Asiatic Chand Bh, aee, and Kishen Kower! It is towards the catastrophe."

He gave such assent as silence conveys, and I began.

CHAND BH,AEE.

And what is death?

It is a sleep in which there are no dreams,
Or, if another life, why not a better?

KISHEN KOWER.

What is death ? It is this, my kinswoman !
 It is to leave the all we know and love ;
 It is the severing of every charity
 That garlands life with flowers. It is to be
 Beyond or smiles or tears, beyond all knowledge,
 Never to hear the voice we love, to see
 The face we dote on ! 'Tis to feel no more !
 'Tis fear to think, that this—*this* body, *mine*,
 Shall in ten thousand atoms meet the wind,
 And that within—ah, where ?
 Ah me ! my kinswoman, death, death is dismal !
 No longer daughter, sister, mistress, friend ;
 Something that has been, like a day gone by ;
 My name the burden of the funeral wail,
 And the sad tale of Kishen Kower's wrongs,
 A nurse's memory !
 Why, Aunt, to hoary age, methinks, that this
 Seems most abhorrent. And to me with all
 My young hopes on me ; to me, joying in life,
 Loving the cheerful sun, the fair, fair earth,
 Loving the flowers, the merest weeds, the sky,
 The clouds themselves, the very loathsomest thing
 That lives, I love !—I *will* not die !

CHAND BH, AEE.

Lay by thy weakness, princess, for I swear,
 By the red blood that burns within our veins,
 I blush to hear a daughter of our house

Forget the glory of her race for baubles,
That each night's slumber shuts out from her senses !

KISHEN KOWER.

Ay, true ! we sleep, and part without a pang
From all we love ; for in our souls we know
On the next morn the sun shall rise again,
And we shall feel it ! But death's dreadful sleep
Wakes never to such hope.

"There, that will do ;—now burn it," said my companion coolly.

How angry I was ! I confess I had some hopes of completing my drama. Kishen Kower had taken hold strongly of my imagination. However, I compromised between the severity of the critic of my own choosing, and my secret prepossessions in behalf of my heroine. I put the sketch aside.

"Now," said I, bringing sundry sheets from the recesses of my portfolio, "here is a paraphrase of something in the Gulistan. No no, scarcely a paraphrase ; sooth to say, there is but the hint of the tale in Saadi. However, here is Gladwin's prose, and there is the thought gone mad."

The King was in his hall of state,
And his sons before him stood ;
And he ponder'd much of their future fate,
As he glanced on *one* with an eye half hate,
And half a mournful mood.

"Ah, why was this my eldest son ?"
His heart exclaim'd, as he look'd upon
The ungainly form, the stature low,
The downcast eye, and the pallid brow,
Of his first-born. That youth was there,
The shade upon a circle fair
As ever blessed a father's eye.
On them, from her rich treasury,
Nature had shower'd each rarer grace,
Of bloom and hue,—of form and face.
There stood they, in their manhood's pride,
As pillars by their father's side.

He raised his eye,—that thing half spurn'd,—
A fire within it blazed and burn'd.
He spake as if his spirit caught
The whisper of his father's thought.
"Scorn me not, father, scorn me not,
For that my form is low and mean ;
Deem not, that Nature *all* forgot;
She gave, at least, a soul, I ween !
A soul that gasps to win a fame,
Bright as of old the mightiest name !
Though mountains far more proud and high
Look with their summits in the sky,
Allah selected SINAI !—

And though the desert oft seem bare,
Deem'st thou no tiger lurketh there?"

"Bravely, my first-born, hast thou spoken!"
The King repentant cried;
"Allah thy soul to mighty thoughts hath woken,
To be thy monarch's pride!
Forgive thy father, that he deem'd
Thy mind was all thy body seem'd.
How much that body lied!
Betokening thee mean, low, and weak,
Thy spirit, like thy bearing, meek,
Meetest for saint; but not the gem
To star my radiant diadem!
Methinks I see thee other now
Than erst thou wert:—upon thy brow
Stamp'd, as in fire, thy brave design
To prove thee worthy of thy line,
Mahommed's lineage and mine!
E'en now, my sons, the foe is near,
His war-note on the blast we hear;
To-morrow's sun must see us far
Beyond the city.—BIS M'ALLAH!"

Foremost on that red battle-field
Rode forth the Prince.—"On, on I" he cries;
"Who follows me, or does, or dies!
But if, amidst this warrior-band,
Trembles one craven heart;—
Hence!—let him throw aside his brand,
And from our host depart!—
Quick to the harem let him hie,
In female garb, on couches lie;

As woman live,—like coward die!—
Cursed be the Chief who flies
The harvest-field of death!—
Thrice bless'd the warrior, whose breath
Is last drawn here!—'midst Houris' eyes,
He suns himself in Paradise!"

The sun is set,—the day is done,—
The battle bravely, nobly, won,—
The victor, the rejected son!

He bows him at his father's knee,
He lays his trophies there;
His eye is proud, and bold, and free,
Radiant with first-felt victory,
And still seems he to dare
The onset of the fiercest fray
That e'er was done on battle-day.

The monarch kissed his brow of pride,
And raising, placed him by his side.
"Noble the deeds which thou hast done,
On yon red field, my first-born son!
Well they deserve a guerdon fair;
And, as thou knowest to defend thy throne,
Be, as beseems thy birth, my heir!
As thou hast won, so nobly keep thine own!"

"Well," said I, with something of an air
of triumph, for *this* was a *finished* specimen,
"What do you think of that?"

"I think little William Evans will be quite equal to its delivery, at the next children's ball his mother assembles for his amusement. You had better keep it for him," replied my friend calmly.

I was in great indignation; I threw my pretty poem—for I *do* think it *is* a pretty poem,—aside. "No more poetry," said I, "perhaps you will be less severe on my prose."

"Perhaps so," said he; "this is an age of inspiration, and trashy verses are a sad bore."

I turned over the leaves of my diary with great energy; I felt exceedingly uncomfortable, and pretty much in the condition of a mother who has listened to a satire on her pet child. And, indeed, love for a pet poem is the more personal feeling of the two.

How meagre! what a skeleton was my diary! We look back on years, and see at a glance all the events they have evolved, and exclaim, 'What a varied tissue is life!' We look at its *daily* chronicles, and we cry, "How monotonous! how the hours creep away, leaving no impression to mark their progress!" Events

are so dovetailed into one another, that we are quite prepared for their occurrence; and when they have passed, the transition seems so natural that we experience no other emotion than satiety or indifference.

So with considerably less animation than before, I read from the pages of my Journal.

" * * * * How ardent and insatiable soever may be one's spirit of inquiry or appetite for novelty, one must of necessity live in the midst of a people the most foreign of any in the world to an Englishman, without the possibility of satisfying either the one or the other, in any adequate degree. Just so much of the customs of the Hindus as are brought under cognisance by domestics, or native officials, or the recurrence of religious festivals, are visible, but no more; for their abodes, for the most part, are inaccessible to Europeans. Occasionally a native of the higher classes gives a sumptuous entertainment, but then it is quite on the Anglo-Indian model, and consequently has no pretensions to be characteristic; or it is a tiger-hunt, with its train of

elephants, tents, horses, and spearmen, and from its novelties I am excluded.

“ * * * * Residence in a camp is a life of the most wearisome monotony, malgré the stirring associations connected with its name. *Here*, it is applied to a force always supposed to be in readiness to march at an hour's notice, which, however, does not prevent those who compose it, from settling themselves in very comfortable habitations. Here is none of the picturesque of ‘the tented field;’ everything is orderly and domestic. Nor does the aspect of the surrounding country at all relieve the eternal regularity of the lines of this extensive cantonment. The society, by the very elements of which it is composed, is in the highest degree exclusive; and what is still more hostile to the preservation of unprejudiced intellect, it is the exclusiveness of *caste*, if I may so speak. It is essentially military. Here is no mixture of civilians of any rank or profession, whose ideas must naturally have an opposite bias, which would be sufficient to demonstrate to the men of blue and scarlet, that there are

interests in this wide world quite independent of line-steps and standing orders. The most interesting, and indeed the incessant topics of discussion, are the last G. O.—the apprehended reductions, the movements of corps, the iniquities of — and — and — ; or a detail of the ‘ Sayings and Doings’ of the last arrival, he or she being, *par excellence*, the lion of the day. * * * *

“ * * * * * The first spectacle that impresses us on our landing in India, is the unaccustomed aspect of our mother earth; we feel that we are indeed in a new world. The form, the foliage, the blossoms, the fruit of the trees, are no longer those which have been our familiar friends from infancy. The flowers are more gorgeous and less fragrant; the sky itself in its bright cloudless blue is foreign to us; and at night it is radiant with a profusion of stars invisible to our northern latitudes. And then the moonlight! such a light for a poet, for an enthusiast! so softly brilliant, so purely glowing, so gracefully rounding every object

on which it falls!—No ; there is nothing here to recall England but by the force of contrast.

" But such impressions are naturally weakened, perhaps effaced by habit. Our moral sense is less sensibly affected in the first instance ; but, probably on that account, the more deeply. It is to be hoped that in many instances the impression may also be more permanent."

" Twaddle!" said my friend, with a very hopeless sigh and shrug.

I turned to a new page, and read, in a voice rendered louder by secret indignation at his provoking fastidiousness. And between ourselves, gentle reader—I am sure you *are* gentle—but *revenons à nos moutons*.

" We no longer breathe the air of freedom. Where is the safeguard against oppression? where is the scourge for crimes which the law cannot reach? Where is the security for the preservation of liberty, independence, character, all that is dearest to man, since power may here wield its thunders unheard but by

the victims? for *here* that guardian from misrule,—that champion of our charter,—a FREE PRESS,—is not permitted.

"The natives are neither sold to slavery nor loaded with fetters; but their European conquerors, men of education, of gentle nurture, of high and independent thoughts, and noble aims, endure a slavery of the mind incalculably more galling.

"Free colonization will at least create a public opinion. How a society may exist, and in what state, *without* this condition, is abundantly illustrated by facts of every day's occurrence on the Indian continent. The action of arbitrary power requires to be checked by that wholesome liability to public discussion which results generally in freedom. There are many petty tyrants, whose oppression would cease as soon as they were convinced that certain misdeeds would inevitably be followed by the exposure from which they are now unfortunately too secure. In this point of view, free colonization should receive

the support of every friend to the happiness, the dignity, and, which includes both, the rights of his species!"

"Bravo!" said my friend, re-composing himself to his interrupted slumber. "You must really excuse me; I am too modest to pronounce any opinion on these profound questions. I leave you to fight the battles of the colonists, and I unreservedly resign the care of providing us with a free press to Mr. Buckingham. I assure you I find Mill or Jeremy Bentham quite sufficiently sedative towards bed-time, without an additional draught. Moreover, is there not a fable,—my classical days are long gone by,—but Icarus and his wings of wax, what was it? FREE COLONIZATION!" And his eyes closed.

I looked on him as some modern Apicius might look, whose guest, at the end of the first course, pronounces the whole affair so execrable that he will tempt it no more;—or, as a popular preacher whose congregation deserts him at the end of his "*firstly*;"—or as a

lover, whose fair one flies just as he has touched the sublime point of his tender tale.

"Thank Heaven! *he* is not the public!" said I. "Therefore, *vogue la galére!* I will print my SKETCH-BOOK."



FIRST LETTER TO ENGLAND.

MY Indian life, my dear friend, has attained the amazing longevity of three months, and ought certainly to afford me materials for a lengthy letter, as P—— calls it, to you who have hitherto contemplated Oriental lands through the kaleidoscope of Moore's imagination.—Ah ! brilliant and delusive visions ! what a contrast in the picture before my mind's eye, when I recall the travels of Lalla Rookh, and that which impresses itself on the retina as I look to actual existence around me !

I do not think nature meant me for a tourist. I have not sufficiently the powers of attention and abstraction, as the metaphysicians call them, to describe the length and

breadth and height of mountains and minarets, palaces and pagodas, tanks and mausoleums: besides, you can learn all this from the thousand and one veracious 'Travels through Hindostan,' 'Sketches of —,' &c. &c. &c. You must be contented with travelling very rapidly with me, from station to station, pausing just as caprice dictates, without any regard to the route "from the office of the Quarter-master General." I shall never detain you long on the road—no, no; the humours and characters of gracious mankind, developed by the peculiarities of Indian life, are the more interesting objects of speculation, in my judgment: at least, that is my forte; and the only chance you have of deriving much amusement from my correspondence, is by indulging me "*i*' the vein."

"To begin at the beginning," the only comfortable moment of our voyage was its termination. We saw land but once between England and the Laccadives, and that was no more than a faint, wavy outline of somewhat deeper shadow than a cloud, lying upon

the horizon at twilight. It was Brava, one of the Cape de Verd isles, which was approached for the purpose of ascertaining the longitude. For eighteen days we were becalmed on the Line,—a delightful variation of the preceding dulness, by still deeper monotony. Occasionally we passed a ship sailing to some other port; and these, indeed, were objects to be remembered. Proudly and steadily, as things “instinct with life,” they tracked the smooth sea; or, in rougher water, were exhibited in all varieties of motion, and—may I say?—of attitude, as if agitated by human passion: a too apt resemblance of the fearful strifes that war in the breast of man. But such a relief of objects could occupy but a short space of the wearisome length of our days: and we recurred to the delights of the Cuddy society with disgust, rather keener, perhaps, from the change the current of our ideas had received, and the awakening of remembrances that darkened the present by the force of the contrast.

If you have any interest in some inex-

perienced adventurer, bound for India, advise him, by all means, to make his voyage in a ship destined to his own Presidency. The evils of a different plan are, at this moment, very vivid in my mind; for who has so much right to speak strongly as one in whom the bitterness of personal suffering is not yet weakened by time? We embarked on board a vessel bound to Bombay, because it was, by a considerable distance, nearer than Madras to the station of our regiment. Consequently, we found ourselves, as we ought to have calculated, amongst people, all of whom having a different destination, the subjects, so to speak, of a different Government, had no sympathy of hope or expectation with us. The improbability of our meeting again was decided, and—mortifying as the assertion is, it is truth—human nature requires some stimulus of self-interest for the kindling of its more favourable dispositions. As far as the personal character of the individual, who at once commanded and owned the vessel, affected us, it was unpleasant. He had some-

what less refinement than usually characterizes even this class of ‘floating hotel-keepers,’ and a seat at a table of which he was president, was no very desirable position. He was good-natured, however, and obliging, so far as his power extended; but he had too much facility of character to be consistent. His wife—whose tattling propensities rendered her good temper rather mischievous than beneficial to our society, inasmuch as she wandered from one passenger to the other, retailing, for lack of better matter, the likings and dislikings of each—possessed too predominating control, to allow me to place her husband in the rank of independent beings. But then she, unfortunately, was quite under the influence of the first mate, a man below even the dignity of caricature, and worthless of a word.

Every one thinks it little probable that he should secure a passage for so formidable a voyage under any but an experienced commander. The fact is, nothing is more difficult than to ascertain the skill of a person in that position. Agents, of course, have the percent-

age in view, and never find it advantageous to depreciate the captain of a vessel about to sail when you are seeking a passage. If any friend can, upon his honour, recommend a ship to you, it would be wiser to postpone your voyage a month, or even two, than to consign yourself to a perfect stranger: you will, ten to one, gain the lost time before you make land. An unskilful commander must be very extensively in the power of his first officer; and if the passengers are accessible, the chance is that the young man is engrossed by social pleasures, when your real advantage requires his alertness and vigilance in the navigation of the ship. Moreover, if he be presuming, his airs of consequence may be rather more disagreeable than anything but experience can imagine. In the first case, you are carried out to a longitude that gives you a telescopic view of the Brazils; and in the second, you have either to endure the annoyance of low-bred familiarity and vulgar companionship, or, admitting your reserve, of insolent defiance and petty vindictiveness—just those gnat-like stings for which

one, never seeks the aid of "the leech," but which may be repeated until "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint."

You will imagine we could hardly be five long months "ploughing the weary waste of waters," without seeing some of the wonders of the mighty deep. It is, indeed, altogether and wholly a wonder: in its calmness so beautiful—in its turbulence so awfully magnificent! But to Byron, "the laureate of the sea," as somebody calls him, I refer you for pictures worthy of the subject; I will only give you occasional sketches of my own feelings, amongst the thousand poetical fancies that crowded upon the mind when the moon was high up in the heavens—the whole hemisphere unsullied by a cloud—the stars walking along in their brightness, and the liquid world around one immense sheet of glass, unrippled by a breeze—its swelling subsided into a death-like serenity, reflecting back the beautiful arch above it—its surface shining in the broad beams of the "full round moon;" then, without speaking, we knew that each shared the

thought of the other, and that our hearts had gone homewards. We were in tears, gentle, and springing rather from the "joy of grief" than its pain. I believe we both felt how much we had sacrificed, but in the same instant were consoled by the perhaps selfish conviction—*we love!*

With all my *moral* courage, which you fancy abundant, I suspect I am as great a *physical* coward as exists. You will scarcely suppose that we weathered a five months' voyage without a ~~storm~~, and my agony during its continuance was so utterly beyond description, that I shall leave it to your imagination. After a monotonous calm of long continuance, I think the male part of our society were positively exhilarated by the bustle, the occupation, necessary to secure the ship's safety. The idlers even chose to remain on deck, and enjoyed the dashing of the waves over *it* and *them*. And oh! the terrific voice of those waves, as it seemed to threaten destruction to the rash pygmies who had dared to invade the boundless empire of

the deep! Even now, as I recall the sensations of those hours, a shuddering chillness creeps over my heart, and I feel as if no hope on earth could tempt me again to incur it. As soon, however, as the storm had subsided, when a breeze filled our sails, wafting us cheerfully towards the desired haven of our destination, there were sounds of mirth and exhilaration on all sides. All the *ridiculous* of the preceding day pressed on the mind in vivid colours, and with renewed force. One enumerated the falls he had received,—another the injury his cabin furniture had sustained,—a third betrayed the fears of his companion, and a fourth described the mathematical figures into which sundry dishes had been agitated, with somewhat more rapidity than suits the decorum of a well-ordered dinner. We went on, day after day, gaily before the wind, resuming our usual occupations—desultory reading, yawning, eating, sleeping, dancing, playing cards. One determined scribe kept a diary. It is still a wonder to me how he contrived to fill it—with “tales of a straw” somebody said. He was a

man of very *minute* mind,—about forty, I conjecture,—very ignorant; but his head being filled with the “*exuviae*” of literature, gathered from third-rate reviews, and fifth-rate booksellers, book-clubs, and reading societies, he had formed a very comfortable estimate of his own powers. He was indeed quite a curiosity in his way; with his gentle self-flattery, his lisping enunciations of the most *outré* platitudes, his talent for singing in a small way, and the outrageous blunders which invariably attended his little literary affectations. He was very harmless, and amused us occasionally; but we became dreadfully tired before the voyage was fairly over; we had heard his round of anecdotes at least a dozen times, and the repetition rendered them “flat, stale, and unprofitable,” *à merveille*. I was very sorry to be obliged to confess him a bore, for whilst one could afford the most languid smile, his exhibitions really answered very well *on board*.

I must not forget to enumerate amongst “the spots of azure on the cloudy sky” of our voyage, the usual diversities of fishing for

sharks, dolphins, Portuguese men-of-war, and the shooting at "*Mother Carey's Chickens*," and the ALBATROSS. Does not that last name recall to you at once the whole story of the "Ancient Mariner?" When I saw one of these enormous birds on the deck, covered with blood, I could not repress a superstitious feeling that the successful marksman was a *doomed man*. Far different thoughts, however, shone in *his* countenance. It expressed unmixed triumph, and a consciousness that he had achieved a deed of fame and prowess. It is really amusing to observe daily, from how many and diversified sources the vanity of man extracts aliment to sustain and invigorate itself. This youth looked down, as if from an unapproachable altitude, on those less fortunate of his companions, whose trophies consisted only of chickens, flying-fish, or even of dolphins. He had done a deed which so far outshone them all!

Nothing can be more beautiful than, looking over the ship's side, to watch the dolphins, apparently just beneath the surface of the water,

displaying their beautiful tints in a thousand gambols. I wonder what kind of a dolphin that was which conveyed Arion from *his* covetous crew. If we had been in a similar predicament, I fear our murder must have been completed, how docile soever the fish might have been. Their size would have been a most unsatisfactory evidence of their power's aiding their will. I confess the beautiful verses of Byron—

“——The dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new tint,
The last, still loveliest; till 'tis done and all is gray”

—tempted me on deck to witness the expiring struggles of one. The varying tints were beautiful, and the last death-hue just like that gray twilight which always seems to me the atmosphere of death. But the blood that was around, produced sensations which convinced me that I am not born to be a connoisseur in these matters.

Imagine my delight on being awakened at sunrise, and carried almost forcibly to the windows of my cabin, to view what surely appeared to me the most enchanting spectacle

this earth could furnish. Land was in sight—lay apparently all round us—and such a land! Magnificent mountains stretching up into the clouds, with every variety of form and colour,—rocks,—jungle-covered, and some clad more nobly with lordly forests. Goa could be indistinctly seen, and its very name awakened recollections that seemed to swell in a moment to a whole history. The water, so darkly blue, was just sufficiently in motion to give one that idea of life and activity most consonant to the “morning’s prime,” when the spirit of man seems to harmonize with the hopefulness and brightness of the young day. Small boats, manned of course by natives—the craft so new to us in their shape, and the sailors in their aspect and apparel—were coasting, apparently, from village to village, whilst a few more adventurous approached our vessel with fish, cocoa-nuts, and vegetables. The whole scene was a panorama clothed in that vivid hue which is peculiar to an Eastern atmosphere. I was almost overwhelmed with delight, and an eager and im-

patient joy to press again my mother earth; to mingle again in the haunts of human life; to explore new scenes, and to be an actor in adventures, which I immediately, in happy ignorance, began to picture as most accordant to the prospect before me. In the whole of my past life I cannot recall a moment correspondent to this in the dilatation of heart, the revival of energy, the consciousness borne upon me that new and higher powers were to be developed and applied to nobler purposes. Yes! that moment was full of a bright and deep happiness.

Like all earthly things, even a long voyage, eternal as one is disposed to consider it, must terminate. Imagine, then, all our perils by sea fairly over, and behold us ascending the bunder at the third of the Indian presidencies.

The harbour of Bombay has been so often described that one might as well think of gratifying the curiosity of an Englishman by a picture of that of Portsmouth, which, however, this is said to resemble very closely. The object which, on our coming to an an-

chor, most forcibly arrested my attention, was the tower of the distant church, an object full of sweet and holy associations to any observer who remembers his early home. There is nothing remarkable in any of the public buildings visible from the anchorage; barracks and public-offices having a strong family likeness everywhere.

Bombay, to speak statistically, is a flourishing and improving city; most advantageously situated as a port for commerce, with a fine and secure harbour, it is gradually becoming the emporium of merchandize from the East and from the West. Various public edifices are in progress to adorn the Fort, as it is called; the suburbs are covered with bungalows, possessing every advantage of situation; the soil is rich, whilst topes of trees in every direction diversify and adorn the landscape. The newly-arrived traveller is constantly amused with the various groupes of Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, Arabs, Parsees, Lascars, and British sailors that are hurrying or sauntering through the streets of the fort.

Every moment his attention is arrested by an object of novelty. Palanquins, hackeries, bannies, buggies, pass in succession before him, as strange to his unaccustomed eye in their appearance as the human beings to whose convenience they are appropriated.

Amongst the most respectable of these pedestrians, he distinguishes a class habited in clean and neat costume, whom he soon learns to denominate Parsees. Of appearance more athletic and stouter, and in complexion fairer than the Hindoos, they are also characterized by that air of occupation which marks the thriving tradesman and the wealthy merchant. They wear a coloured turban of a chintz-pattern, with a peaked, perpendicular crown, without folds; their jacket is white, reaching down to the knees, and their drawers of the same material, rather loose, extend below the calf. A great part of the traffic of Bombay is in their hands, and in their independent habits they seem to me to bear the same relation to the remaining population, as the Quakers to that of England. Their females wear an oriental dra-

pery, frequently of crimson silk, with a broad purple border, forming, in one piece, the head covering, and the outer garment of the body. They are constantly visible carrying huge vessels of water on their heads, from the adjacent wells, recalling all the Scriptural histories of Rebekah and the princesses of Israel. Under these burdens their gait is erect and graceful, and their step firm. Their ankles are uncovered, but their feet are clothed in a slipper with no hind-quarters, but pointed in front, the extremity turning up in that manner which is recorded as a prevailing fashion in the reign of Richard the Second ; whilst the Mussulmauns, on the contrary, have the extremity of the slipper broad and square, with a much smaller peak ; the material of both is morocco of various colours, embroidered. The Parsee women are tall and finely formed ; their faces oval, their features good, and their countenances expressive.

The Parsees, (originally fugitives from Persia,) retain their ancient worship, and are Ghebers. Every morning at the rising of the sun,

they hail him with their homage, and in the evening they watch his retiring with the same devout observance. At the latter season, when, for the benefit of the sea-breeze, I have been carried to the beach, I have observed on the shore innumerable Parsees, each individual at a distance from the other, breathing his audible prayers to the luminary, whose last rays yet lay on the waters. Many have prayer-books, and all frequently bow their foreheads to the earth in Oriental salams. Few, however, were so engrossed by their devotions as not to cast a stray glance on passengers.

The houses of the wealthy Parsees are large, and abound in Venetians. Some of the chief of them occasionally give sumptuous entertainments to the European residents, in the English style, and no person, however elevated his rank may be, declines the invitation. At sun-set, a lamp is always lighted at the door of every individual of this sect, which burns until the sun has risen. Considering fire as a sacred element, they are careful never to extinguish a light by breathing on it, although your servant

will compromise between his convenience and his conscience, by waving it to and from until some friendly gale shall accomplish his purpose.

The native women of this part of India are not distinguished for their beauty. They are generally short, stout, broad-faced, and flat-featured. I saw, indeed, a few pleasing exceptions; amongst whom, I particularly remarked one young girl, of dark-olive complexion, Grecian features, and as sweet an expression of countenance as I ever remember to have seen, notwithstanding the bad effect of the large nose-ring which she wore.

One of the most painful objects I witnessed, was a leper. Amongst his dusky countrymen he wandered as a being on whom a visible curse has fallen; the skin of his whole body exhibiting an unvaried hue of scrofulous-like pink. Amongst Europeans, his disease would have been less remarkable; but so totally distinct from his dark Asiatic brethren, he seemed, indeed, an outcast, rejected by country, home, and lineage.

Though accustomed to the various sounds

that fill the streets of London, every stranger must be sensibly affected on his first arrival at Bombay, by the extreme and uncouth noises and violent gesticulation with which the natives are accustomed publicly to express their anger with each other. One is in momentary apprehension that the result will be blows; and no Englishman, so excited, would ever think of settling the dispute in any other method. Amongst the Hindoos, however, this rarely occurs. Abuse, of the grossest and most virulent description, they will lavish on their opponents, but pugilism seems, for the most part, to be beyond the scope of their passions.

The society here is divided into several parties, amongst which, it is impossible to preserve your neutrality, because the mere fact of your being seen at Mrs. S's house, will exclude you from the entertainments of Mrs. G's. At the present period, these petty divisions had acquired magnitude and importance, by the dissension between the governor and the chief-justice. It is foreign to my purpose to discuss the merits of this question, or to intrench on

the prerogative of newspapers or other public journals. Popular feeling seems to be in favour of the judge; but you will have received, long before this time, ample documents from which you will form a judgment more correct than mine, which is likely to be influenced by personal feelings and prejudices.

After a month's residence then, we quitted this Presidency for a march through the Deccan, which offers a favourable crisis for the conclusion of a very long letter.

A TOUR OF VISITS.

IT was about eleven o'clock on one of those fine sunny mornings, for which India is more notorious than admired, that descending the steps of my verandah, I entered my palanquin, with the benevolent purpose of "bestowing my dulness" on as many of my neighbours as were disposed to admit me.

"Erskine, Sahib," said I, and forthwith the vehicle was put in motion.

The sun poured a broadside on my left, for which to close the doors was the palpable remedy; but on the other side, as if to make the *amende honorable*, a cool breeze (it was December, and my place of location on this habitable globe was latitude 22° north) blew

freshly on my cheek, so I took comfort and my book together.

People always read in a palanquin, if they are fortunate enough to get hold of the supplying material, and if they are so happy as to be permitted by persons who are more influential than might at first sight be imagined.

Onwards ran the bearers; up and down, and on this side and that side, like a vibrating scale, very nearly, but not quite balanced, *pendulated* my carriage; and the words of my book seemed to fall to pieces before my eyes, and the letters jumped about in all the confusion of a country-dance when the performers are *out*. In despair I closed it, and in the next minute enjoyed the relief of being deposited safely at the door of Captain Erskine.

"*Hi, Sahib,*" were the welcome words of the servant in waiting, being equivalent to the English "*at home,*" agreeable or not as the case may be.

At a morning-call you may very often find

a majority of the *single* young men of the station assembled, so that you may call the meeting a *matinée*, as distinguished from the *soirées*, to a place at which, so far as my experience goes, only the fortunate *married* are eligible, except by formal invitation.

In this case there were four or five gathered together, whom I found in the midst of an argument on the merits of a certain obnoxious paragraph in G. O. emanating from the Commander-in-chief, who dealt with the feelings of officers as mercifully as he did with the English language, cutting up both without scruple, and luxuriating most in his effusions, in proportion as *en morale* and *en littérature* they advanced daringly *hors de règles*.

My entrance afforded a seasonable interruption, and the lady of the mansion extended to me a reception of flattering kindness. She was evidently tired of the interminable changes rung on the everlasting theme of General Orders, inasmuch as she had no interest in the matter; Captain Erskine being in the service of a native prince, *nominally* independent,

whose troops were officered by Europeans, *not all* in the service of the King or the Company; and who consequently were regarded by the magnates of the service, much as the regulars at home estimate the militia.

Mrs. Erskine was a beauty in duodecimo, and entitled to be rather more foolish and ill-tempered than one would have thought desirable in a plainer woman.

"So, Purbeck, of your's, is going to be married at last!" began the lady.

"Such is the report," replied I; "but if this be not the region of imagination, it is of invention, and I hesitate to believe anything that is wafted to us on the current of a mere *on dit*."

"Oh! but this is from the best authority. I had it from Mrs. Paulet, the lady's sister. Purbeck and she were *compagnons de voyage*, you know, and there is no way of killing the tedium of long 'travel by water,' like love-making."

"You are exquisitely correct, my dear Mrs. Erskine," said Mulgrave, a young subaltern

on leave ; " I existed through the horrors of a five months' passage solely by adhering to that prescription. My noble ambition of being esteemed the best conductor of a flirtation in India early dawned within me, and our first roll in the Bay of Biscay witnessed the practical application of the sublime theory I had conceived. How it fared with me, *sub silentio sit* ; — pardon me, it is oracular to speak in an unknown tongue. And so Purbeck has positively worked himself up to matrimony ! having an eye, I presume, to the connexion with the Adjutant-general's office."

" A fair speculation," said Major Lumley, " and a sure means of passing through company duty with as few drills as the oldest woman in the service could desire."

" But what *could* possess the girl ? " resumed Mulgrave. " The man is such a thorough petrifaction,—an automaton, whose springs carry him at given hours to the parade, through the routine *& la Torrens*, and that is the essence and soul of his being. Beyond that martial

book, and the chronology of the General Orders, his head is guiltless of a single idea."

"Oh, you wrong him," returned the Major; "I assure you that Captain Purbeck is never blind to the most remote contingency that can possibly affect the interests of—Captain Purbeck."

"Do not be scandalous," drawled Mrs. Erskine; "I never patronise abuse. I do not think Purbeck so *very* bad; a *little* cold, perhaps."

"Oh, most chillingly so, my dear Mrs. Erskine," interrupted Mulgrave: "his mono-syllabic orations are distilled from him like drops of rose-water passing in minute time—one—two—three—through the alembic. Who ever saw his cheek kindle for an instant either in hope or anger? Who ever saw his eye lighten as if it were indeed a window into the soul within? His complexion is always frosty,—his eye for ever icy. I caught cold during the hot winds through a visit from him: the thermometer fell forty degrees on his entering

the hall, and the instantaneous transition from *oven-heat* to shivering point was too much for my constitution. I have heard that at home, being overtaken by a snow-storm, the snow-flakes in the congenial atmosphere of his face remained adhesive in all their magnitude, for he had not animal heat enough to melt them."

"That should be one of the Colonel's own," said the Major drily, who, not having a grain of imagination himself, invariably classed warmth of descriptive colouring with that vice of the mind which the vulgar call *falsehood*.

"Unless you would see me expire in convulsions, Major, conjure not up that dark horror. I heard that Mrs. Wilby fainted two nights since with terror at the magnitude of his Munchausens," replied Mulgrave, with an expressive shrug. "What upon earth placed that man at the head of a force? It is an enormity sufficient to afford matter of memorial to the Honourable Court. People at home have no idea how matters are managed here."

"As *everywhere*,—by *interest*," replied the Major.

"It ought to be by *policy*, rather," said Mulgrave. "A frontier station on the borders of a foreign territory is a door worth keeping locked by strong springs; and to put *such* a warden over it!—a man who has neither head to direct, nor hand to execute."

"Nor bull-headedness enough to compensate for his deficiency in mental vigour. He is over flexible to the touch of his native butler," said the Major.

"Ah, if it were permitted, 'I could a tale unfold,' of a man who, without common-sense, truth, honour, or honesty, military skill, or—tell it not in Gath!—military courage, solely from his relationship to a man *in office*, is kept in an important position, in which he can only injure the government he serves, and ruin, perhaps, the officers who have the misfortune to serve under him."

"You and the weather are getting warm, Mr. Mulgrave. Pull the punkah, you Bhoi," said Mrs. Erskine, rather enjoying the bitterness of the young man.

"Don't stop him," said the Major growl-

How, then, shall the still small voice of *merit* be heard in the bustle of the claimants who surround him? The ties of blood, or propinquity, or obligation, must naturally supersede the far inferior rights which an unconnected individual may fancy he derives from extent or period of service. "*Interest! interest! interest!*" are the three indispensable qualifications, without which let no man hope for one iota more than the regulations absolutely secure to him.

Nor does the immediate head of *our* department deviate by "the twentieth part of one poor degree" from the practice of his contemporary. "*Interest is qualification,*" is *his* axiom; and not one action of his can be produced, in proof that its application is not universal. He has other peculiar prejudices also, which exhibit him in a phase not exceedingly admired by this army at large. He is not suspected of any undue partiality to *Company's Officers*; indeed, his contrary prepossessions have sometimes been so manifest as to excite

universal indignation in parties who take the freedom to fancy themselves injured. The perseverance of a refractory court-martial, in a sentence *not* "approved and confirmed," elicited a threat of a new organization of the army at the approaching crisis. What heart-burnings! what mutinous excitement there was amongst us! In what court, civil or military, would so tyrannic an interference with its conscientious judgment be permitted? Adieu to the boasted trial by Jury, if the Judge is to menace with punishment an enlightened Juty, who honestly, and to the best of their knowledge, decide on evidence submitted to them. The trumpet-tongued press of all Britain would awake, to defend the sacred right of free judgment, according to a man's conscience. But *here* that tongue is silent, as if there were, indeed, one tract of British ground where Britons are no longer free men; as if the grave of an Englishman's liberty had indeed been found *here*.

My reflections had just reached this point,

when their bitterness was seasonably interrupted by the sound of an approaching bandy,^{leggs} which slackened its pace as it came alongside.

"Is that you, K——?" asked a voice which I recognized as belonging to Wartnaby, a young Lieutenant; but who was pardoned by spinsters the sin of subalternship, inasmuch as he was in the Commissariat, the only branch of the Service in which, in these days, a man has any chance of accumulating.

"Are you going to Cameron's?" he continued, when I had assured him of my identity; "come, get into my bandy, and send away your bearers; I will drive you there in less than ten minutes."

I gladly accepted his offer, and we were presently rolling along, with a speed that promised to realize his assertion.

"Well, Wartnaby," said I, "you are going to look at the spinster in pretty considerable haste: this augurs well for your matrimonial inclinations."

"It is a 'lying divination,' then," said he,

laughing; "I have vowed a vow against all manner of love-making and match-making, with any girl, of what kind soever, whom any possible combination of circumstances can have brought to the Indian market."

"It were well that were said *quietly*," I replied; "such a declaration would draw on you the wrath of three-fourths of the female part of the cantonment."

"Of course, because three-fourths of them are precisely in that predicament. No impertinence of mine can induce them to cut me; slave never toiled harder to propitiate tyrant, than I to become hated of them. What a misfortune, K——, that a man should be naturally so prepossessing as to render his making the *disagreeable* a moral impossibility!"

"Coxcomb! if thou wert other than the best fellow in the world, thou wouldst be past endurance."

"That is proof experimental of the truth of my assertion," said he, laughing: "Who can dislike Ned Wartnaby? kind Ned Wartnaby!"

honest Ned Wartnaby ! good Ned Wartnaby ! Not even Mrs. Paul, who hates all the world besides."

"I thought you really *had* effected a cut there."

"By no manner of means. I have refused at least nine million invitations, but her last chit threatened me with a call from herself if I absolutely declined, and I was compelled to show myself there last night. I did the honours of my impertinence in the finest possible style. She had the assurance to mention as *opprobrious*, that the divine Mrs. Markham is the daughter of a tradesman. I mildly ventured to inquire, if she were aware that sundry of our English peeresses were in the same predicament. She persisted with true half-caste impenetrability, and I really felt myself compelled to say—‘Can you, Mrs. Paul, kindly add a much more important piece of information, inasmuch as the circumstance may have been influential in the early nurture of the lady,—*who was her mother?*’ The animal, with the greatest *sang-froid*, protested igno-

rance, and I really believe felt as little affected as if she had been made of wood or stone."

"For a man of liberal ideas, your prejudices against this race of unfortunates, are more than reasonably strong."

"It is those very prejudices that are the root, the ground-work, the cause of my liberality. The class is so unnaturally bad, that their moral aspect *must* be the result of a political error, which I would wish to be removed for *their* amendment. But perhaps, if I would open up some avenues to their advancement in society, I would close others. Look at the immense distance there is between the position of the male and female portions of these people. Should these things be? Is there *cause* to sanction such disagreement? Are the one better educated than the other? Are their earliest ideas more carefully cultivated? Is the young female plant less liable to be warped by the ungenial influence of—unhappy fact!—a *mother*? Look at the history—the daily lives, of too many officers of this army, for the melancholy answer; and believe

that a well-born and well-educated Englishman, may be *denaturalized* by an unhappy marriage with an Eurasian, if it be their pleasure so to call themselves. *Allons donc!*" and we alighted at the door of Captain Cameron.

We found him on a couch, before which a sofa-table was placed. The room was impregnated with aroma purely Indian, the odour of the hookah, from which he was inhaling oriental luxury. On the table was a glass vase containing a bouquet of oleanders, tube-roses, the splendid *Rosa mutabilis*, Indian stock, and peacock's pride, the rich colours of which were relieved only by half a dozen green leaves, decidedly indicating the taste of native servants, who carefully abstract the leaves from the flowers they cull for this purpose. A glass dessert-dish was half filled with water, the surface of which was covered with roses in close juxta-position, literally decapitated, the stems being absent on leave; another native taste. Their delightful perfume was perceptible, notwithstanding the neighbourhood of the hookah, sweet in themselves, and the more sweet for

their associations with all one remembers of dearest, purest, and best, at *home*. In this part of the world, what are called in England monthly roses are common enough in gardens, but they are without the least perfume. Those which were at this moment delighting me, are much rarer.

Two tea-cups, half full of cold tea, proved how harmless was the beverage which formed the accompaniment to Captain Cameron's hookah.

Line-steps and general orders were discussed as usual with the emphasis of personal feeling. Letters from home and newspapers, Buckingham and the renewal of the Charter, were severally communicated and commented on. Interesting as each and all of these topics might be, our eyes wandered towards the doors with that restless impatience of curiosity, allowable in two individuals in whose life the sight of a new female face, the possessor being unmarried, was, like angel's visits, "few and far between."

"Don't be in a hurry, K——; wait a little, Wartnaby," said Captain Cameron, with cha-

racteristic delicacy, " You shall have a sight of my young lady in time. Why, Wartnaby, man," addressing himself more particularly to my friend, who, I have already hinted, is in the Commissariat, " you have resolved to marry at last, I hear. Don't take an old standard in the country, my boy, they never wear well ; they wear *out* though," enjoying his execrable attempt at a pun. " Hear, you boy !" calling with the voice of a stentor, " go tell mistress two gentlemen here."

The domestic presently returned.

" Mistress too much busy, S-a-a-r ; mistress not come," said he.

" Why not come ? why too busy ? what you tell mistress ?" asked Cameron angrily, falling into the colloquial English of the natives, which one does habitually, as being more intelligible to them.

" I tell mistress, ' Master tell come, mam ; two gentlemen here ;' then mam ask ' What gentlemen ? ' ' I not know,' I tell ; then mistress too much angry, and say,—' Go, go ! I

too much busy ; I not come ? And therefore I tell master."

" Go away, go away, you 're a fool," a conclusive way of answering a mal-a-propos truth. " The fellow has made some mistake, I 'll go myself."

And he entered his lady's sanctuary forthwith, which not being within ear-shot of the hall, we lost the benefit of their *tête-à-tête*.

" *Wash-head* day, my diamond to a ducat," said Wartnaby *sotto voce*, which purely Indian phrase is very much in use amongst ladies country-born and country-educated, and, I fear, even prevails amongst English women who have lived so long here as to forget the better usages of home. It needs scarcely be explained as meaning, that the lady is engaged in one of those ablutions so frequent and so grateful in this climate.

Whatever might be the reasons urged, or the entreaties or commands used on this occasion by Captain Cameron, they had ended in his total defeat—not an unfrequent result

in matrimonial conflicts, I believe, whether performed in the East or the West.

"She is not well—that is, Mrs. Cameron is not well, and Lucy is with her," said he, sulkily insinuating the bad success of his mission. It is astonishing how much *moral courage* it requires to enable a husband to confess the undignified fact—"My wife *will* not come!"

We chatted a few minutes, but Cameron's temper was evidently disordered, and Wartnaby started off double quick.

"That is one of the punishments a man suffers for the sin of *such* a marriage," said he, as soon as the vehicle was in motion. "These Indian women are never fit to be seen before the evening drive, or, if earlier, at a tiffin-party."

"Disappointment, as usual, renders you bitter," said I; "that is a classification Mrs. Cameron would not forgive. She is an Armenian."

"Oh yes, so are they all, all—all of them Armenians! Was ever man so changed from

gentleman to barbarian as yonder Cameron since his marriage?"

"The man had always *capabilities* for the character, you will allow."

"Well, if I were an influential man in Saint Stephen's, I would assuredly add a clause to the divorce-bill, for the benefit of men in Cameron's unhappy predicament. I would make a woman's causing herself to be denied more than ten times in every month, a sufficient ground for granting a *prayed* for divorce, without alleging one other cause of complaint."

"This unusual bitterness is surely indicative of some *presentiment* of the future influence of the fair Lucy—Lucy!"

"I detest the name—Lucy—Louisa—*Tarza bi tarza, nou bi nou!*" sang he, perhaps as the most effectual way of causing his spleen to evaporate.

At Mrs. Marley's, where we next alighted, we found a large party sitting in committee on the merits of the lady, whose invisibility had so unfortunately disqualified us from being enrolled as members.

The usual questions and answers having been reciprocated, the discussion proceeded.

"My dear Mrs. Marley, I quite disagree with you; her complexion really is not so good as you imagine," said Mrs. Lieutenant Clinby, with her usual *minced Irish*; "it will not last, I assure you; *pink whites* never do; *blue white* is the only good complexion for this climate."

"Exactly," said Wartnaby, with a bow, making the palpable application.

"But such a foot!" said the diminutive Mrs. Captain Harris; "I saw it with the heel out of the shoe, looking as if it were afflicted with elephantiasis."

"She has a large hand and foot, I allow," said Captain Proby; "she is a fine woman, nevertheless, and very like Miss O'Neill, such as I remember her, at the time of her debut, when I was a young man about town."

Captain Proby left England *atatis* sixteen, and had lived the subsequent twenty-five years in India. He was one of that class who, in the fond imagination of having outlived the remembrance of their origin, assume the airs of

men of family, and talk of their connexions with the decisive air of people who are secure against contradiction. He piqued himself on the accuracy of his toilet, and the unexceptionable elegance of his manners, which he believed to be perfectly in keeping with the best *ton* of the age. It was suspected that they were formed on the model Chesterfield recommended, engrafted on the propriety of a Grandison, with a sprinkling of Indian peculiarities which no talent can escape, after so long an abode in this climate. He read much—all the new novels, pamphlets, and sketches of society within his reach, and he adopted the style and sentiments of the literary favourite of the day—*usque ad literam*. You always knew what work had had the benefit of his last perusal, for he delivered its opinions verbatim, with the accurate simplicity of a parrot. Trifles naturally float on the surface, from which, by the way, it is by no means to be inferred that the depths contain any thing to prove that nature abhors a vacuum. Captain Proby abounded in anecdote, and was

amusing during at least his two first visits; beyond these his intimates charged him with repeating himself, and affected to know the precise chord which would produce the sound required; the key-note, the sounding of which would awaken any instrument of the whole orchestra. He was a great critic on female beauty, manner, and accomplishment,—given to scandal and tea-parties,—decisive in detecting indications of talent, or of the want of it, and philosophically sceptical of any that extended beyond the very circumscribed range of his own ideas. He gave magnificent entertainments—exhibited services of plate, quite *en prince*; piqued himself on bowing like George the Fourth; and was, like all others who have just sipped “the Pierian spring,” a coxcomb in the knick-knackeries of literature—a pendant in manner, by too great anxiety after the perfection of elegant ease,—a man who played his small character in life with great verbosity and overmuch gesticulation, delivering the meanest and simplest ideas with a

pompous periphrasis, that reminded one too often of the *flourish of trumpets, and enter Tom Thumb.*

"Like Miss O'Neill!" almost screamed Mrs. Slater, who was lately from Europe. "My dear Captain Proby, what an antediluvian idea! Miss O'Neill is quite forgotten, I assure you."

"A waif upon the stream of time," said Captain Proby, with his usual felicity of application, and complacent sentimentality.

"One might as well forget that nobody reads Miss Edgeworth," continued Mrs. Slater, who, being lately imported, insisted on giving the ton in literature, as well as dress and style.

"How impossible!" said Wartnaby, affectedly; "just as if we, the devotees of Vivian Grey, Almack's, *et hoc genus omne*, could possibly endure books which come recommended only by sound sense, a perfect style, exquisite discrimination, cultivated taste, extensive and accurate observation, and the applause of all the literary world of Europe, for

nearly half a century. I assure you, Miss Edgeworth may be considered quite exploded, and Miss O'Neil as forgotten, as if

“Fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her.”

“The sticks that forget her, I suppose,” said Colonel Hornley, laughing convulsively at his own execrable pun.

“I do not admire Miss Edgeworth,” said Captain Proby, with his emphatic tone of criticism; “she is too much of a blue-stocking, and too little of a wit.”

He paused, and seemed to feed with mental delight on the felicitous introduction of so brilliant an antithesis.

“I do *so* hate blue-stockings,” said little Mrs. Harris, with a pointed glance at Mrs. Slater.

“The term and the character, I thought, were quite antiquated, even in this outer settlement of semi-civilization,” returned Mrs. Slater, with the same amiable personality. “I believe you will find females in general *something*

literary now," at home; *fifteen years* must naturally afford time for great advancement in an age distinguished for the march of intellect."

Mrs. Harris coloured, bit her lip, and tossed her head. Just fifteen years since she had commenced her Indian career, and so palpable an allusion could not be evaded.

Mrs. Clinby, who by no means approved this interruption of the attack on a new arrival of suspicious beauty, took advantage of the momentary pause to renew it.

"Well, I must say, I think Miss Cameron's figure very overgrown and masculine," she began. "She must be at least five feet eight; how monstrous for a female! I do not think her at all a good life for this climate."

"Her wisdom will be then to marry some retiring Colonel, and return home forthwith," said Wartnaby, who held Mrs. Clinby in abomination, and threw out the suggestion for the charitable purpose of discomposing her.

"Colonels are not so attainable now-a-days,"

returned the lady, who reciprocated Wartnaby's dislike with great cordiality ; " they who think of going home, are wise enough to await the end of their voyage, and to marry when they can know what they are about."

" Such knowledge is more easy of acquirement here, I should apprehend—I speak always under correction — than in the midst of that variety England offers, to waylay and tempt him at every step," replied Wartnaby, who was always reluctant to leave a lady in the quiet enjoyment of the sex's high prerogative—the *last word*. " To be sure, men marry ill everywhere, and as the chances are ten to one in favour of his being taken in, I advise, for Miss Cameron's sake, that this identical Colonel, we and the Fates intend to procure for her, should make his best bow instanter."

" I wonder who she was," resumed Mrs. Clinby, shifting her point of attack, for she was remarkable for hunting down every sufferer she started ; " I never heard of the Camerons being connected with anybody in the least respectable. And what a woman is

Mrs. Cameron, to produce her ! I absolutely expire whenever she enters my doors."

" Ah, but one *does* die so often in this unhappy clime !" responded Wartnaby, with an affectation as similar to the lady's as a moderate and skilful caricature can be to the original ; " and then one recovers so quickly and so entirely—making at worst only just an Irish '*being kill'd of it.*' "

Mrs. Clinby tossed her head, and talked *from* Wartnaby.

" Girls are so soon spoiled after their arrival in this country !" she said to Captain Proby ; " you flatterers completely turn their heads : they forget everything about home except the finery to be procured there, and imagine themselves people of great attractiveness and beauty, merely because they are not unnoticed."

There was a smile, a general and expressive smile, on the countenances of that circle : it was so extraordinary, they thought, that Mrs. Clinby should so far satirize herself : *she* had emerged at once from the depths of "*rustical obscurity*" into the theatre of an Indian Presi-

dency; she had all the advantage of that pure English complexion for which our island country-women are so famous, and she had fine light hair and bright blue eyes, which, if they were not overmuch lighted by expression, were *still* blue and bright; and she had a tall slender figure, and a prettily turned foot and ankle, and easy manners—that ease which does not result from acquaintance with the habits of elegant society, but from a happy unconsciousness of deficiency; and she danced tolerably, and sang a little—had a new wardrobe and dressed well; and finally, after six days' courtship, married Lieutenant Clinby, to the great scandal of all those whose propriety had sustained a siege of as many weeks. No transformation ever was so complete; it seemed as if one soul had transmigrated from her body, and a second had replaced it: the whole “hue and colour” of the character were different. Impressed with a great idea of the importance she derived from her connexion with the nephew of an earl, she “fooled it to the top of her bent,” to the amusement of one half of

her acquaintance, and the disgust of the other : she continually drew on herself disagreeable reflections by consequential assumptions, and she put the whole world on discovering points from which she might be attacked to advantage, merely because she had the folly to hoist flying colours from every angle and bastion of the fortress. Perhaps no vice, however enormous, so surrounds a human being with enemies as egregious vanity, because it continually wounds our neighbour's self-love.

Tired of the discussion, I made a signal to Wartnaby, and we withdrew.

Indian society is indeed but a miserable exchange for the social enjoyments of England. In the out-stations, the proportion of females to the other sex may be as one to fifteen, or as one to twenty. This alone contains a sufficient cause of the generally uncultivated manners and exterior of the majority of the young men ; yet, even these, few as they are, and sometimes objectionable, are rarely united by any bonds of sympathy or attachment. So far distant from home, almost exiles

in a foreign land, a theorist would imagine that these circumstances alone would be sufficient to form strong links of union: this is very far from being the case, and the counter-acting causes are sufficiently obvious to those who see the vast dissimilarity of manner and intellect, principle, and religious feeling, which separates them,—and *unapproachably* so, when, as is too frequently the case, there is an intermixture of female Hindoo-Britons.

It was asserted, a few years since, that this race might often boast in its veins the blood of Jenghis Khan and Aurungzebe—an assertion the absurdity of which six months' residence here abundantly evidences. The prejudices of the natives, both Hindoo and Musulmaun, with regard to what *they* denominate caste, are too often thrust on your notice to escape knowledge. Native women of the higher class are *never* the mothers of children by Europeans: on the contrary, these women are generally of the very lowest class, frequently menials of the most degraded description, and as ignorant of the moral obligations

of chastity and fidelity as midnight darkness of intellect can render them. Scarcely elevated above the level of the beasts that perish, the glimmering of reason they possess is just sufficient to teach them cuoning, treachery, and petty theft. During the first five or six, and sometimes ten or twelve years of life, their unfortunate children—the children likewise of an European *gentleman*—are left to their companionship, having no additional society but that of bearers and other servants, and almost always unacquainted with any other language. After this period they emigrate to some “Establishment for Young Ladies” at Madras or Calcutta, where they are taught much that every thinking man would wish his wife or daughter to forget with all possible expedition. A passion for admiration and dress is generally—is universally, one of their acquirements, and their taste, as usual, bad in proportion to its extravagance; for the same want of mind which produces the desire, of course perverts its direction.

A young man leaves England as a cadet or

writer, buoyant in hope of Oriental splendour that is to realize the gorgeous pictures of the Arabian tales. He dreams of vales so fertile as scarcely to require the artificial aid of culture—of ease so entire, as to be interrupted by no exertion, but the pursuit of pleasure—of wealth to be acquired with equal speed and facility, and honours to be attained at no distant period. And what is the reality to the military man? He soon discovers, that his income does not suffice to supply his actual wants, that it cannot meet the positive requirements of the climate. To incur debt is easy, and this leads to present extravagance and future ruin, or at best, to so protracted a residence in India, as to despoil him of his memory of home, his longing after it, his taste for the more enlightened society and enjoyments of Europe, and an apathy, destructive of all those energies which are necessary equally to his utility as a moral being, and his progress as an intellectual one. Few sufficiently thirst after knowledge to pursue it for its own sake, when the excitement of emulation is lost, and the re-

compense of fame and distinction withdrawn
So the promising youth sinks into the idle dan-
gler after vain, and silly, and somewhat vulgar
women, who are valued, as the African savage
values glass beads, not for their intrinsic worth,
but their novelty and rarity. In time he thinks
of marriage, and he takes the first girl into
whose society he may be thrown, whose affecta-
tion, extravagance, and ignorance, redouble his
pecuniary difficulties;—and his libations be-
come more frequent, and years and disappoint-
ments increase upon him, and he sinks into an
untimely grave, and then—

“ Alas ! poor Yorick !”

THE NATIVE CHARACTER.

If one instance beyond all others furnishes us with a proof of the powerful influence exercised over the most distinguished intellect by partiality for those subjects, to the study of which it has been long and deeply devoted, it is the extraordinary prejudice in favour of the arts, the sciences, the literature, the religion, of the Hindoos, imbibed by minds, distinguished on all other points for the soundest judgment and most accurate discrimination.

It is not within the compass of a short essay to enter extensively on so profound an investigation. But a slight sketch may be ventured as the result of a comparison of the assertions

of various writers on India, with such observations and inquiries as the residence of an European in the country may enable him to make.

The Hindoo views of the Deity, so far from being sublime or elevated, are, in the highest degree, gross and absurd. The mystical interpretation which some writers have endeavoured to put on their mythology, is by no means within the limits of the apprehension of the multitude, whose whole idea of religious mysteries is bounded by a Procession, or a Pooja,—a sacrifice to propitiate the elements, often successive days and nights of the “sound-
ing of psaltry, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music,” to charm away the devil, and the sum total of whose deities, as avowed by a Brahmin, amounts to three hundred and thirty millions.* The absurdities, the contradictions, the vague expressions, the inexplicable confusion of their sacred books, are palpable to the most superficial reader, who enters on their perusal with an unbiassed judgment. Nor is

* Tennant's Indian Recreations.

any inference in their favour to be drawn from the lofty expressions they occasionally apply to Brahma, which generally, like lights in a picture, stand out the more from the dark obscurity or absurdity which everywhere surrounds them.

Sanctity, according both to the doctrine and practice of the Hindoos, is but a series of successive inflictions of self-torture; consequently he ranks most highly in their estimation, and receives the largest portion of their reverence, who voluntarily endures the most excruciating pains. Moral excellence they neither understand nor appreciate. In their religious books, indeed, detached sentences may be found that seem to inculcate morality as an object more worthy of practice than mere ceremonies; such, however, are but insulated passages, the great mass of their doctrines tending to produce, and actually producing, amongst their disciples, directly contrary impressions, as the following facts will testify.

Fidelity to the marriage vow is a thing almost unknown amongst them: their licence

of opinion on this point, places them on a level with nations in the lowest state of barbarism. Polygamy is common, perhaps universal amongst them. The Cooleens, the highest class of the Brahmins, practise it to the most frightful excess. The Sooreetro and Bung-soojo, who are in the grade just inferior to the Cooleens, but superior to all others, consider themselves bound to give their daughters in marriage to the Cooleens, who demand money for the honour of their alliance. The facility thus afforded of gratifying their avarice, produces the most disgusting effects, as one individual of this class will sometimes wed ninety or a hundred girls for the sake of their marriage portion, whom he never afterwards sees.

Amongst no people on the face of the earth are women holden in lower estimation than by the Hindoos. As the rank the female sex holds in the community is universally regarded as a criterion from which a judgment may be formed of the degree of civilization a nation has attained, we are compelled to place the Hindoos on the very lowest step of the scale.

From husbands to wives, personal violence of the most cruel and brutal kind, sometimes even to death, is of common occurrence. The husband, moreover, has a power of divorce on almost every pretext with which caprice, passion, or revenge, can furnish him. The women, on the contrary, can never regain their freedom from this tie, how severe soever may be the sufferings it entails on them.

Amongst the higher orders of Hindoos, as well as Mussulmauns, the whole life of women passes within the walls of the Zenanah in the strictest confinement, a restraint from which the poverty of their husbands, and the necessity of their performing various offices of labour, exempts the poorer classes. The minds of all are most deplorably neglected, the least possible degree of cultivation being carefully withheld. Nothing can more forcibly illustrate their degraded condition than the simple fact, that they are not permitted to eat with their husbands. Amongst the lower orders, the most laborious offices are performed by the women, such as the tiling of houses, beating

chunam, carrying heavy burdens, &c. &c., which, in highly civilized countries, always fall to the stronger sex.

The want of honesty in general, and of veracity more particularly, amongst the natives, may be traced to several causes, but it is sufficient here to mention one or two which are the most prevalent and the most potent.

The chance of escaping punishment is one great temptation to crime all over the globe, for wherever this chance is greatest, there crimes most abound. Unfortunately, it is matter of daily experience, that unless men are restrained by the dread of retribution here or hereafter, the natural moral principle, or instinct, for which some theorists contend, is so feebly operative as to be, in fact, perfectly ineffectual. It is very difficult, in a criminal court in India, to fix a charge upon a criminal; the cause of which is, the great facility with which the prisoner can always procure witnesses to prove an *alibi*, to whom perjury is habitual, and who, so far from considering it sinful, or a violation of the precepts of religion, deem it

always pardonable, and sometimes even laudable. Sir W. Jones himself has said, "Perjury seems to be committed by the meanest, and encouraged by some of the better sort among the Hindoos and Mussulmauns, with as little remorse as if it were a proof of ingenuity, or even of merit." I have heard a magistrate declare that he could procure any number of witnesses to vouch any fact whatever, at the price of *an anna an oath!*

The reverence which they entertain for their priests, the Brahmins, probably exceeds that with which any other nation regard the ministers of their religion. The Shasters are compilations tending to enslave mankind in the most complete mental thraldom to that class of the community with whom rests their interpretation, and for whose exaltation and pre-eminence they appear to be expressly written. Even the most absolute Hindoo princes have always been—those yet remaining on the native musnuds still continue to be—subservient to the will of the Brahmins, bending their legislative tyranny to the tyranny of priesthood,

with an awed and timid reverence exceeding that paid by the most bigoted Roman Catholic prince to the infallible Head of his church. The arrogance of the priest is imbibed from those sources from which he draws his code of religious belief. There he learns that he is equal with his God, and superior to his prince; consequently, that he is above all law, and possesses in a pre-eminent degree in his own person, the "right divine" of doing no wrong. Hear what their own Sacred Volumes declare: "The Brahmin's power, which depends on himself, is greater than the royal power, which depends on other men."—"The Brahmin who shall retain in his memory the Rig Vedas, shall obtain salvation and bliss, even if he shall have slain three worlds."

The person of a Brahmin is considered sacred, and himself impeccible. To entertain Brahmins sumptuously, is constantly inculcated on the Hindoos; abuse of a Brahmin subjects the offender to death by torture; stealing from one, to death by fire. This contributes in no small degree to fill the minds of

the multitude with awe of them ; and the ignorance in which they are plunged acts as a powerful auxiliary. They are prohibited from reading the Sacred Books, and just such portions are communicated as most directly tend to augment their veneration for the priesthood. They are instructed in the performance of certain ceremonies, on which they are taught to believe that their salvation depends. Their faith in an absolute fatality absolves them from a dependance on the issue of morality, and precludes their repenting of a guilt which seems compelled upon them by the invincible necessity—the dark Atys. Moreover, their religious fears of the effects of disobedience subside before those two consoling causes,—the knowledge that crime may be expiated by certain repetitions of forms of words,—and that the priest has the power of absolving. It is necessary, therefore, that the favour of the priest should be secured at every risk. The Shaster permits occasional lying, and now the doctrine is inculcated; that in the service of a Brahmin it is not only allowable but merito-

rious; therefore, to secure the desired absolution, perjury affords the readiest and most efficacious means. Thus to arrive at the truth in the civil and military courts, where natives are parties or evidence, is attended with almost insurmountable difficulty. Laying aside positive falsehood, their evasiveness, their proverbial unwillingness to give a direct statement, or afford a direct answer to any question, their exaggerations, resulting in a great measure from the genius of their language, their clouds of metaphor and hyperbole, the superfluous circumstances with which they overload every narration, render it one of the most tedious and trying tasks imaginable to investigate their complaints, or to decide on their causes. It seems a trial of their sagacity to out-lie each other.

It is the policy of the Brahmins to make their own caste the sole depository of knowledge. Aware that its diffusion is the communication of power and of freedom, they know that their despotism must cease, their influence, their honours, and their wealth

evaporate, if once the avenues of science are open to the vulgar, if once they are permitted to inquire and to investigate. It is to be hoped, nevertheless, that a spirit is abroad with healing on its wings. At the seat of government a wonderful change is effecting; men of the higher orders are beginning to emancipate themselves from the triple fetters in which more than three thousand ages have found them. They are associated with Europeans, in literary and scientific societies, as well as in other undertakings. They publish a journal in their own language, and printing is likely to be as efficacious in abolishing their superstitions, as it has been universally proved the mightiest engine in the amelioration of the intellectual and social condition of the nations of the West. The throwing of a greater portion of wealth into the bands of other classes, which has been the effect of our intercourse with them, must also produce beneficial effects, —slow, perhaps, in their operation, but certain in their ultimate issue.

No political constitution ever was more ad-

verse to the progress of intellect than that established by the Hindoo laws. Bound by them to follow the vocation of his father, however contrary to his genius, hostile to his feelings, or humiliating to his ambition, a son must remain for ever in the same sphere in which he was born, and from which, as neither heroism nor talent can elevate him, the stimulus to both is withdrawn. No aristocracy in Europe even approaches to that exclusive spirit which separates the Brahmin from the other orders, and places an eternal and impassable gulf between him and the unfortunate Paria; that race born to bear the curse, "aliens to the commonwealth" of their brethren,—"hewers of wood and drawers of water,"—scorned and outcast—uncheered by hope—incapable of obtaining consideration from their kind—shut out from the social tie, as if foredoomed to vice, "hating and hateful." But, under the British government, they recover, in some degree, their privileges, and naturally become attached to rulers, under whom they are secure in the possession of the fruits of their

industry; and, being a numerous body of the people, they are never despicable as adherents.

The respect entertained by the natives for our superior prowess, our acquirements, and our science, is doubtless a grand,—a principal, security for the preservation of our influence here. Another powerful cause exists in the heirship of implacable enmity and hatred that exists between the Mussulmaun and Hindoo population, who seem never to lose, the first the haughtiness and tyranny of conquerors, and the latter, the vindictive feelings of the conquered and oppressed. It would be difficult to find a motive sufficiently strong to unite them in enterprise, far less to ensure that unanimity amongst their leaders, that faith and that secrecy on which the success of every combination—especially of every conspiracy—must depend.

"To leave the natives," says Dow, "entirely to their own laws, would be to consign them to anarchy and confusion; The inhabitants of Bengal are divided into two religious

sects, the Mohammedan and Hindoo, almost equal in point of numbers. Averse beyond measure to one another, both on account of religion and the memory of mutual injuries, the one party will not now submit to the laws of the other; and the dissension which subsists between individuals would, without a pressure from another power, spread in a flame over the whole kingdom. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to the peace and prosperity of the country, that the laws of England, in so far as they do not oppose prejudices and usages which cannot be relinquished by the natives, should prevail." The insinuation contained in this last sentence of Colonel Dow's, is daily proved to be an act of diminishing necessity. The abolition of a rite, to which the natives have adhered with extraordinary tenacity for ages, has been effected without the least symptom of commotion. Many of the most distinguished Hindoos have advocated this measure of the government warmly, and the slight opposition which was raised by the mercenary class of the priesthood,

has evaporated in a few letters conveyed to the public by the medium of the press, and in the convening of a meeting which got up a remonstrance to government, that died a natural death, as the last cry of worn-out prejudices generally exhales itself.

One great obstruction to the redemption of the natives from their present abominable idolatry is, that it encourages and administers to all their most violent passions and most depraved appetites. Christianity is an arena of perpetual conflicts with self, inculcating the severest restraint on the first, and the strictest self-denial of the latter. Moreover, they are of perception so gross, as to be little susceptible of impressions from any objects but those which strike vividly on the senses; hence, probably, the policy of their priests adopted the expedient of those frequently recurring pageants, which flatter this appetite, and increase it by encouragement; almost every action of life has its appropriate ceremony, every domestic event, every change of season. The result of an attempt to *modify* Christianity to

their apprehensions, is abundantly manifest in the Roman Catholicism of the native Portuguese, which is in nothing less absurd and idolatrous than Hindooism. Christianity, in its reformed mode, is a worship so purely spiritual, that nothing less than the Divine agency seems likely to be effective, in causing it to be adopted as the *real* belief of the natives of this climate, in their present mental darkness. Wedded to pomp and splendour, they despise a simplicity which they have not intellect enough to venerate ; engrossed by the most determined sensuality, what to them is the hope that is spiritual ? Dazzled by the voluntary tortures of their Yogees and Yanassees, they would discern nothing to compensate for the loss of this "will-worship" in the "sacrifice of a humble and contrite spirit." It is probable that the diffusion of knowledge will prepare the way for the reception of divine truth, by refining and purifying their minds, gradually, but surely ; by elevating the human intellect above the brute-sense ; by weakening, and eventually destroying their

prejudices. Whether this immense improvement of their mental powers, this communication of the might of moral strength, be desirable in a political point of view, is not to enter into our consideration as *Christians*. As sovereigns, it is our duty to ameliorate the condition of our subjects; and in our other higher character, as the depositaries of sacred truth, we are never to forget, that to be a means of evangelizing the world, is part of the tenure by which we hold our privileges; and we ought, in feeling that "we have nothing which we did not receive," to acknowledge, in every action, our conviction that the light is given to "us, not to be "hidden under a bushel," but to be poured forth by every possible avenue, on "every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and language" under heaven.

MANAGEMENT.

THERE are people in the world who are *born* diplomatists; who cultivate finesse as an art, and who, in their moral progress, have an invincible antipathy to a straight line—whose mental motion is, in fact, always spiral.

"Shall I invite Vernon to dine to-morrow?" said Mrs. Raymond to her husband.

"Why not? I understood it was to be a general thing," replied the gentleman.

"Oh, my dear Colonel, that is so like you; forgetting the utter, the complete impossibility of the thing! In that case, we *must* invite Mrs. Slade, you know; and there is *her* sister and *his* to be produced, of course; and they are rather good-looking, I hear—not that I fear their

throwing Rose into shade, she is too excessively pretty for that—but distracted attention—that is, *divided* attention, is always injurious; and they say Arnold—the Collector, not the Lieutenant—is rather struck with one, I forget which—and he is so perfectly unexceptionable—and then there is the Resident very desirous of seeing Rose, but fond of music; and Miss Slade plays well, and one cannot avoid asking her to try the new piano. In fact, I have thought it wiser to have only married ladies—Mrs. Barney, she squints—Mrs. Graham, as dark as an Ayah—and Mrs. Jones, who is really a perfect female Falstaff, and eats more than two Aldermen. So you see, it is by no means general, my love; and one can omit Vernon without being pointed, you know."

"But what for, Mrs. Raymond? You have always so many reasons for what you choose to do, that confound me, if I can understand one."

"Depend on it, my dear Colonel, nothing is to be done in this world without proper address; you are so terribly opaque, that you

would spoil the best management on earth. However, either I am to act as I please with regard to your niece, or I give up the whole concern; and, moreover, I am positively decided on *not* inviting Vernon."

"Once again, *why*, I ask?"

"Were they not fellow-passengers on board, and is not the voyage the eternal subject of discussion whenever I am so foolish as to allow him to be admitted? And is not Rose evidently quite delighted to talk with him? And have not I seen her neglect other people when he comes up to her as we ride out at night? However, I have desired the horse-keeper to report the horse lame, so I have secured *that* point at least. The carriage is much safer,—much more correct,—though, by the way, Vernon thinks proper to trot his horse by *her* side even then. Very presuming and forward that young man,—for a *subaltern*, moreover, and *not* on the staff!"

"Precisely my own position when we married, Mrs. Raymond."

"Yes, my dear, true, I was a very foolish

young girl then, and had no sound advisers. One gets wise too late: let Rose, therefore, have the benefit of my experience."

"A thousand thanks, my love."

"Nay, my dear, I mean no complaint. You are very unexceptionable as men go, and I assure you I find no fault with you, except that you are rather obtuse on all matters of management,—so necessary, too, as it is. However, you must agree with me, that if I did *only well*, there is no reason why Rose should not do *better*, and I consider it my duty to try *the best* for your niece, Colonel Raymond."

"Very good, my dear; only if, as you say, there *should* be any attachment between these two young people,—Rose and Vernon—"

"*I* say? Excuse me, Colonel Raymond, this is a very extraordinary charge, and one which I am the last person in the world to deserve. I did, indeed, hint at the possibility of some *flirtation* existing, which, though the farthest in the world from any thing serious, might be in the highest degree injurious to the best interests of our dear Rose. There is a

wide difference between a flirtation and an attachment, my dear ; but, nevertheless, it may give rise to unpleasant reports, and I must have my way in this point."

And Mrs. Raymond, as usual, not in this point only, but in *every* point, *had her way*, and the dinner was given, and Vernon was *not* invited.

Rose, however, felt his exclusion, and was offended by it : but Mrs. Raymond was too well satisfied with her own powers to dread any very unpleasant results from the displeasure of her ward.

It is a delicate thing to state with precision a lady's age. Mrs. Raymond, perhaps, might be verging to that period which is so clearly and happily defined as a *certain age*, because it is just the most *uncertain epoch* in the life of woman. Her best friends pronounced her "fat, fair, and forty," and their judgment was probably rather indulgent than otherwise. She was a *character*, principally, perhaps, because she always aimed at being one, which of itself constitutes a marked individuality. Somebody

said she had three distinct species of vanity—vanity of beauty—vanity of wit—and above all, vanity of management. She piqued herself on an *air spirituel*, which gave a charm, she conceived, to sharp, keen, and irregular features. She *had been* fair; fifteen years' sojourn in India had not improved her complexion, but *en revanche*, it had not diminished her satisfaction with it. Her skin was perfectly guiltless of wrinkles; and looked remarkably well by candle-light, and with the aid of a little rouge and a critical assortment of colours. Her stature was low, and her figure *en bon point*; her enemies—and when is merit without enemies?—her enemies declared, even to grossness. But she consoled herself, or rather offered incense to her own vanity, by remarking to all her friends, the dreadful angularity—the complete want of roundness, that characterised every tall, slender woman of her acquaintance. She danced actively even in India, walked in her compound more frequently than any other lady in the cantonment, perambulated the verandahs when the heat or the rain prevented her making a sortie,

which all the world *here* know to be the case, except at sunrise or after sunset, the year round. Then she valued herself on the art *de raconter bien*, and procured for her constitution, by this medium, quite sufficient exercise to carry off superfluous humours. Egotism must be a constituent part of such an idiosyncrasy. Being of immense importance to herself, she believed that others shared her sentiments. Thus her economy of her time and her fortune — her hour *de se lever et de se coucher*—how she got fat and how she got thin, what she ate, what she drank, what she said, what she dreamt, all furnished her with topics, pressed too frequently on the attention of most unwilling hearers. She was *liberal without being generous*; she gave pecuniary assistance with an unsparing hand to all her needy friends; but then she liked to have the *éclat* of it, and to be paid by applause. She did not draw upon *hereafter*, for what she conceived good actions done *here*. She was clearly of opinion that the portion of fame a person really enjoys, is just that of which he feels, hears, and

sees, the sweetness. She required incessant manifestations of the gratitude of those she benefited, until they sometimes suspected that this payment was much heavier and more burdensome than a quadrupled payment in kind. Besides, she had no idea of what we call *delicacy* in such matters. If you were poor, why wish to conceal it? Why suffer embarrassment when, in the course of conversation, she alluded explicitly to your circumstances in the presence of strangers? Did you blush to be *obliged* to her? Were you ashamed of being grateful? Long and loudly she argued in this manner, until the most favoured of her protégés felt themselves the victims of her vanity, and writhed beneath the galling liberality that had given them gold indeed, but compelled them to taste, drop by drop, the bitterness of that cup which her egotism perpetually obliged them to drink.

Confiding implicitly in her *savoir faire*, she had counsel for every contingency, and her own annals seemed to afford a precedent for every possible combination of circumstances. It was really astonishing how one individual could con-

trive to comprise in one life, such an amazing fund of experiences of all kinds. She had the best of all authorities—successful experiment—for every remedy she suggested for every evil. Therefore she demanded that all your reason, your judgment, far more your feelings and prejudices, should be disregarded on the strength of her *dictum*. Believing herself to see so much more clearly than other people, she treated the objects of her immediate operations as absolutely blind, and seemed to expect that they should imbibe the same conviction. She was, in every respect, an elaboration of activity; and her dinner-parties and her evening parties cost her a *bustle of occupation*, which very few constitutions could endure in *any* climate, and which, in this, seemed to threaten absolute death. Therefore, when the time of the assembling of her guests arrived, she was generally in her own apartment, under the influence of a fit of hysterics, which obliged her to appear late amongst them, but which afforded her a long-continuing topic of self-pity, in bewailing the excessive delicacy of her constitu-

tion, and the strength and energy of mind which, positively, was too much for the fragility of her body. "So that, having," said an old Major, too keen-sighted to be considerably in her favour, "the size of a porpoise, and the clatter of ten parrots, she exercises her grampus-like propensity of puffing, until her self-inflation produces a suspension of natural animation, and she complains at finding herself reduced to that state of quiescence which forms the chief blessing of every man, woman, and child, who is compelled to endure the horrors of her acquaintance."

Mrs. Raymond had her party, and Vernon was absent. The table groaned under the plenty of an Indian dinner, and glittered with its costliness. There was, as usual, one immense course, succeeded by sweetmeats and fruits, a dessert, in fact, placed on the table *before* the cloth was withdrawn. There was abundance of expensive English luxuries: hermetically sealed salmon, cakes and preserves of all kinds, costly wines cooled with saltpetre, liqueurs the *chef-d'œuvres* of the French dis-

tillery, all that could gratify the appetite, please the eye, or brighten the imagination. There was a hecatomb of compliments offered to the presiding divinity, that homage which she loved so well. During the process of eating, there was little attempt at conversation, but the corporeal wants of man being satiated, there was some effort made to supply his mental cravings. The silent smoked hookahs, and listened most patiently to the talkers, soothed into tranquillity by the monotonous lullaby of the bubbling water. Nevertheless it was a very dull party, passing the dulness of Indian entertainments generally. The Resident talked of Miss Slade's playing, and the Collector toasted Mrs. Slade's sister, and Rose was in the sullens, and quite impracticable. She made no impression, that was evident; and, as Mrs. Raymond justly said, "the party was evidently thrown away."

Mrs. Raymond had too much tact to notice her niece's dissatisfaction, far less to attribute it to Vernon's absence. She never attempted by any overt act to restrain the freedom of her

intercourse with him, and when he called she received him with that frank friendliness which she extended to all her acquaintance, never *perceptibly* distinguishing the superior rank, which really formed the passion of her soul, if she had a soul. She was too skilful a general to betray her tactics to the enemy ; occasionally she spoke with a sigh of pity of the miseries necessarily to be endured by subalterns and their wives, regretted the total want of interest which completely excluded so many fine and meritorious young men from the staff; bewailed the privations to be endured by well educated young women who, by marrying thoughtlessly, put themselves out of the reach of those comforts and indulgences which alone can render India tolerable, and pressed on the view of her fair listener the attention paid to half a dozen married women whose incomes afforded them all the splendours of life. Rose was young, flexible, never of very strong mind, and educated for India. She liked Vernon passing well, and any manifestation of opposition to her attachment on the part of her protectress

might have had the effect of confirming that attachment. But she had been taught to place a high value on position, and the luxuries that attend large incomes and superior rank. She had not strength of mind sufficient to face the severe economy which must mark a subaltern's life, or condemn him to perpetual debt and exile. She flirted with Vernon, without any intention of marrying him, and accepted at length,—thrice happy moment of Mrs. Raymond's ambition!—Mr. Arnold, the Collector, who had been scorched beneath five-and-twenty summer suns in India, without any worse effects than liver,* corpulence, and a saturnine complexion.

Vernon thought himself jilted, and was highly indignant. But these more violent emotions soon die a natural death in a tropical climate. Mrs. Arnold was quite the fashion; she gave magnificent parties,—sported superb equipages,—carriages, elephants, luxuries both of the

* In Indian phraseology, a person suffering from hepatic affection is said "to have liver," probably because in seven cases out of ten he has *almost none*.

east and the west ; received visitors of all classes with amiable good-temper ; and, Vernon resolving also to visit her, commenced a flirtation at the house of a mutual acquaintance, and from that moment the affair was *en train*,

It was very soon a matter of course, that Mrs. Arnold should be driven every evening in a curricle Vernon sported just at this time, to the great scandal of the field-officers of the station. He must be involving himself very deeply, they said ; no subaltern could afford two horses in addition to his riding-horse. He might wait six or eight years for his company yet, and in the mean while his debts would be increasing to a fearful magnitude. And what in the world was Arnold doing ? Was he blind, and could not see ? or deaf, and could not hear, what all the world were talking about ? And where were Mrs. Raymond's wits ? Had she lost her acuteness and penetration, which she was everlastingly employing in affairs that did not concern her ? It was a great pity her faculties, which were so constantly directed to the benefit of the universe at large, were not a

little more useful in the guidance of her own connexions. It was really to be lamented that she had chosen the precise time for napping, when it was most requisite that she should be wide awake.

Mrs. Raymond *did* awake at length, and she set herself to divert the current of affairs with all possible address.

It may be questioned whether she really felt all the uneasiness she wished to persuade herself that she actually suffered. Such a fine field of management did not frequently invite her powers. So much delicacy, so much tact was required. She passed two sleepless nights in deciding on the best method of commencing her operations. Should she write to Rose? No; she did not think epistolary communications half so effectual or persuasive as oral. Should she alarm her conscience,—rouse her pride,—or appeal to her feelings? It would be too tedious to follow her thoughts through all their meanderings. The result was the following note.

" MY DEAR ROSE.

" Will you be at home, and quite alone, this morning, at noon precisely? I wish to pass an hour with you *tête-à-tête*, if you can spare me so long. You know that I am not a very formidable personage, and you cannot, therefore, refuse me on the ground of alarm.

" Yours, very much,

" JANE RAYMOND."

To which the following answer was returned.

" MY DEAR MRS. RAYMOND.

" I should have the greatest delight in receiving you as you propose; but Vibert, the artist, is to have a sitting from me just at the hour you mention, and Mr. Arnold is anxious that my portrait should be completed without delay, as V. quits this very shortly. Any other time, if I am fortunate enough to be disengaged, I shall devote an hour to my dear Mrs. Raymond, without any alarm, and with the greatest pleasure.

" Yours, affectionately,

" ROSE ARNOLD."

Now Mrs. Raymond had not exactly calculated on being refused; so, as she could not obtain the interview she desired, she made her call at noon nevertheless, and contrived to be present during the whole of this sitting. Vernon was one of the guests; but as Mr. Arnold himself was also there to superintend the efforts of the artist, and amiably unconscious that any other person was at the same time superintending the appearance and attitude of the exceedingly pretty original, Mrs. Raymond thought she could not very plausibly mention the circumstance to Rose, as objectionable. At length the sitting was over, and there seemed to be a tacit struggle between Mrs. Raymond and Mr. Vernon to compel the other to depart. At length the lady invited herself to tiffin; but as the gentleman was very quickly and quietly seated at the hospitable board, it seemed evident that his presence there had been expected. Mrs. Raymond finally was compelled to beat a retreat, being for this time completely out-generated.

Mrs. Raymond had always given her niece

credit for the greatest possible simplicity and facility of character. She calculated on her being pliant to the influence of superior *mind*—(Mrs. Raymond patronised that word *mind* even beyond the *cant* of the day)—as the osier to the wind. It was a great pity that the accuracy of her views of things was so much distorted by considering the position she herself was to assume, more than that in which others actually appeared. She was so engaged in planning her own operations, that she overlooked the important circumstance, that an unforeseen movement of the enemy might entirely derange her projects. She forgot that the very error—she did not even dream that it might deserve a harsher name—on account of which she meant to remonstrate, must, in its very outset, destroy all the simplicity of Mrs. Arnold's character, and quickly render her an adept in *management*, competent to baffle the keenness of the most vigilant inspector of her actions. She forgot that woman's first attempt at concealment is the first admission of the serpent into Eden.

Mrs. Raymond felt herself constantly baffled in all her attempts at gaining a *tête-à-tête* with Rose; but she had no cause of complaint. Mrs. Arnold always received her visits with the greatest pleasure, indeed with an unusual appearance of affection,—but then she was never alone, not for one minute, whilst Mrs. Raymond remained with her. Rose also paid frequent visits to her uncle,—every devoir of this kind was punctually fulfilled,—but she always came attended with such a *suwarree*,* as Mrs. Raymond called it, that any confidential intercourse was out of the question. And this lasted for more than a month, until Mrs. Raymond's temper began to lose its equanimity, and her vexation at being *out-maneuvred* by a child, as she called her niece, mingled some resentment with her better feelings. Finding, therefore, her progress completely obstructed in this direction, she turned, like a person to whom all routes are equal that conduct him to his destination, into a different path.

Colonel Raymond received her first hints of

* Crowd of horsemen—attendants.

the matter with ridicule and positive incredulity. But the mere repetition of an assertion, unassisted by any additional weight of evidence, goes far to enlisting our faith on its side. When once he was sufficiently wrought on to view the subject as serious, he saw enough to corroborate all Mrs. Raymond's assertions ; and he felt, more deeply than she did, all the misery that threatened Rose, because he had no ambition of displaying his own cleverness, or of introducing himself amongst the characters of the scene as an adviser, a judge, or an avenger. Moreover, he had a very deep feeling of the shame and dishonour that shrouds an erring wife, notwithstanding his long absence from Europe, and he thought no risk too great, no action too hazardous, to prevent the fixing of so tremendous a stigma on the child of his brother. He was a very straight-forward person, and it struck him that the individual most concerned in the business was the husband, who was likely to be the severest sufferer. Colonel Raymond never dreamed that it might be expedient to temporize,—that it would be

well if the endangered wife's progress were stopped without her possible errors being brought at all under her husband's cognizance: and though Colonel Raymond had a very proper conjugal feeling of the general cleverness of his wife, he had some suspicion that she occasionally *over-managed* her own concerns, as well as other people's; and he had a thorough conviction, not the result of any long process of internal reasoning, that his best plan would be to go quietly and directly to Mr. Arnold, and advise his cutting Mr. Vernon dead with all convenient speed.

Mr. Arnold was aghast. Supine, from the effect of long residence in India, and from his habitual yielding to the climate, he had been satisfied with seeing the very beautiful face of his wife clothed in constant smiles; with hearing her cheerful laugh, and with sitting down daily at a table covered with a splendid dinner, and surrounded with lively guests. He thought Vernon an excellent fellow, and was well pleased that Mrs. Arnold shared this feeling. If she preferred Vernon's curricile to

her own carriage, he saw no reason why her preference should be opposed. If she selected him as her cavalier at a ball, as her *escorte hither and thence*, well and good; it saved her husband the annoyance of accompanying her, and the disagreeableness of teasing her by keeping her at home. Mr. Arnold had an excellent temper, and really suffered so much from causing pain to any human being, that a species of amiable selfishness rendered him the most obliging person in the world. No husband on earth could be more indulgent. It seemed as if the chief gratification his large income afforded him, was to administer to her taste for jewels and equipages, and those delights which are generally most coveted by the young. He was pleased to be considered by her the very kindest being of her acquaintance, and he received her lively thanks for every fresh proof of his attachment, with the fond delusion that they originated in that mingling of love and gratitude which constitutes, probably, the best principle of conjugal affection. And now to be so rudely

awakened to be told that he might possibly be a dupe, the *dupe* of a mere girl, whom he petted as a plaything, and whose nature he had deemed as guileless as that of the just-fledged bird that makes its first flight from the parent nest ! Mr. Arnold was completely overcome; an instant sufficed to convert the "milk of human kindness" with which his heart abounded into gall. His vehement indignation assumed a character the more formidable from his general state of quiescence and equanimity. It was long before Colonel Raymond could persuade him to adopt such measures as were necessary at once to secure his wife's virtue and her reputation. He condemned the Colonel, Mrs. Raymond, and himself, for their blameable blindness; he execrated Vernon for his meditated sin against every law of morality, every bond of hospitality; he alternately exaggerated and extenuated the weakness, the meditated ingratitude, of his wife. But the stormy mood exhausted itself at length by its violence; and when the Colonel left him, he was satisfied

that he would immediately adopt that course of conduct which was most likely to result in the preservation of his honour, and the redemption of his happiness.

Mrs. Raymond was perfectly *enragée* that the Colonel had ventured on this important step without asking her advice or opinion. She flung from him in a fit of high disdain, and dispatched instantly the following missive to Rose, in the persuasion that she was actuated merely by the benevolent feeling of apprising her of the exact situation in which she stood. If she could have detected the disproportionate measure of the desire of counteracting the imbecile plans of her husband, as she called them, she might, perhaps, have felt less complacency in the analysis of her feelings.

" MY DEAR ROSE,

" I have in vain endeavoured for some time to give you a hint of the various rumours that are in circulation, not only through the cantonment, but in fact throughout the Presidency, of your violent flirtation with Mr.

Vernon. You have so perseveringly avoided any confidential communication with me, that I am at last driven to this very unsafe method of conveying to you intelligence which, perhaps, will now reach you too late. I have no leisure for preparation, and it is not expedient to delay. In a word, Mr. Arnold is in possession of some fact connected with you and Mr. Vernon, which will probably lead to an immediate *éclaircissement*, for which my desire is to give you warning to prepare yourself. What may be the real state of the case you only can be aware. At any rate, to be taken quite unawares, might elicit some sudden disclosure, which it would be prudent to avoid, and which might enlighten Mr. Arnold more perhaps than would be desirable; if, indeed, of which I am by no means certain, anything remains unknown. Prepare yourself.

"Yours, very truly,

"JANE RAYMOND."

In the evening of that day the whole cantonment was in a state of agitation. Mrs. Arnold

had quitted her husband's house, and was actually living in Mr. Vernon's quarters.

The next circumstance to which public attention was directed was a duel between the deserted husband and the criminal lover. The whole proceeding was conducted with the greatest regularity. There was nothing that could possibly be construed into the slightest tincture of unfairness in either party. But Mr. Arnold found *his satisfaction* in death, and Mr. Vernon honourably added the character of murderer to that of seducer and adulterer.

Mrs. Raymond's agony was boundless. Her conscience upbraided her incessantly with her ill-judged interference. She went through all the paroxysms of feeling to which a person of her busy, active, vain temper may be supposed to be subject under the influence of remorse. Her lateral admissions of erroneous judgment and foolish precipitation were unextenuated even by *her* general habits of self-complacency. It was the first time that the bad effects resulting from the spirit of manage-

ment had ever been displayed to her in forcible colours ; and now the whole picture was so appalling, so awful ! She could not be persuaded to view the body of Mr. Arnold,—her victim she called him,—and her imagination clothed him in horrors beyond even the terrible reality. She was wrought to a perfect fever of mind which partook of insanity, and the images that were perceptible to her mental vision were terrific as they were incongruous. Sometimes she charged the whole on the guilty widow, sometimes on Vernon,—on herself : for, let her accusations wander where they might, they invariably returned to this point. Disturbed by the cruellest remorse, she suffered the natural consequence in this climate of feelings violently excited—she was the prey of a prolonged and dangerous fever.

That the guilty Mrs. Arnold endured in her first feelings of anguish the measure of the Divine vengeance on her crime, may be imagined ; but naturally of a temper that skims only the surface of things, she was not long without the alleviation that time brings to

every sorrow. She was very much disposed to attribute the whole affair to Mrs. Raymond's violent proceeding,—to the foolish chit which had brought on a crisis neither she nor Vernon had ever before contemplated very distinctly. Then she went back to her marriage—her *forced* marriage she called it, overlooking the trifling circumstance of its being entirely the result of her own free-will ;—if she had been permitted to marry Vernon ! if she had not been over-persuaded ! if she had not been terrified by representations of the privations to which the wife of a subaltern was exposed,—representations too so greatly exaggerated ! And thus “she laid the flattering unction to her soul,” until she brought herself to receive Colonel Raymond with composure.

The Colonel felt as a man on whose honour a stain had been cast by the misconduct of a person so nearly connected with him ; he felt also, as a friend, the death—the sudden, the awful death, of a being he had esteemed. Neither was he insensible to the evils of poverty, and obscurity, and disgrace, to which

his most criminal niece had exposed herself. He expected to see her overwhelmed with remorse—subdued by repentance—sinking beneath the despair of the dark future. He came prepared to speak words of comfort; to offer protection,—a shelter in England,—the relief of competence to obscurity. He meant to say, “Sin no more,” and to offer the means of preservation. The reception of him was naturally an agitated one. “Some natural fears she dropped, but wiped them soon;” she discussed every topic calmly—spoke of the future with something approaching to cheerfulness—condemned the whole of Mrs. Raymond’s proceedings most unscrupulously—extenuated all her own share of the transaction, and represented herself as the victim of her aunt’s too great love of controlling everybody, and managing all the world. Poor Colonel Raymond was completely overwhelmed by finding her in a state of mind so contradictory of all his anticipations. He had arranged his mind for offering consolation, and he found himself the person who most needed it. He became at

length indignant, and inwardly confessed that no heartlessness exceeds that of a fool, and that a man may as well hope to impress a statue with deep or high feelings, as that most impracticable of all created things—a pretty idiot. However, the Colonel did not suffer his indignation to counteract the designs of his benevolence: with recovered composure he steadily advised Mrs. Arnold to proceed to England forthwith—to have no fear of a provision for the future, because, having been the cause of her being brought to this country, and having advised the marriage that had been dissolved under circumstances so awful and painful, he held himself bound to care for her future provision.

Mrs. Arnold was quite astonished that the Colonel could contemplate any other line of conduct for Mr. Vernon and herself than a marriage as soon as possible. She did not doubt they would be able to exist comfortably: she did not require splendour; and if the people of the cantonment did not choose

to visit her, she could exist without them : and then Vernon would soon get his company ; and when he was a major, he would pay his debts, and, on the whole, she was sure they should get on very well as soon as this misfortune was a little forgotten.

" You cannot forget—you will never forget that Mr. Vernon is your husband's murderer !" said the Colonel, provoked into severity.

" It was all quite fair ; and if one were to call every duellist a murderer—" She burst into tears.

Colonel Raymond distinguished between the agitation of grief and that of passion.

" I have but one word to add," said he : " to waive all suggestion of the impropriety of a marriage under your circumstances—Vernon is under arrest, and will as surely be dismissed as he will be tried by court-martial : he will have no means of supporting you ; and I tell you, Rose, very plainly, that you have nothing to rely on but the plan I offer. Suppose your marriage with this man to take

place, and our connexion, our intercourse, cease for ever? Take time to reflect, and let me have your answer to-morrow."

Whether she was capable of reflecting may be doubted; however, she did marry Mr. Vernon.

As Colonel Raymond had predicted, he was dismissed the service. An income of one hundred and fifty pounds yearly, the recent bequest of his father, whose death had been hastened by the report of his son's misconduct, was their sole earthly resource: they retired to France, and remain there at present, in what degree of comfort may be conjectured, by reflecting that Vernon had, for ten years, been accustomed to Indian habits and indulgencies—that his wife was educated entirely with a view to visiting India on a matrimonial speculation, and is as vain, shallow, and thoughtless, as a woman of that class may be imagined—that she enjoyed the luxuries of Colonel Raymond's house on her first arrival in the East, and subsequently was surrounded by all the expensive comforts and superfluities which affection could lavish round her. No rational per-

son can doubt that their lives are spent in a succession of reproaches, repentance, privation, and disgust—all that makes this world a type of that more fearful judgment which is to constitute the darkness of a future one.

JOURNAL OF A MARCH.

Thursday, 18th June.—PURSUANT to G. O.
left — forthwith, being compelled to do so,
the officer commanding the division not choos-
ing to connive at my remaining—Great bore—
wish he were transferred to the invalids—most
suitable service for *him* and half a hundred
more. I wish I had the pruning of the Army
List, we would see some promotion—I hate
subalternship—wish I had my Company.—
Mem :—to write instanter to Neyland, to know
if he purposes returning, and what he will
take to go out—not that one step is worth a
great deal—but, however, it is just so much
nearer the majority, “our being’s end and
aim.” Ferguson cannot live through another

hot season—White must invalid—Price, if he marries his cousin, will remain at home—I know Evergreen is a very bad life—I shall *then* be within one of the spurs.—Dreadfully unfortunate corps!—not a step these three years. I wish, instead of sending me to India, they had made me a clerk or a chimney-sweeper.—What ignoramuses people are at home! I fancy they think “gold, and all manner of precious stones,” grow here.

Well, we are at the end of our first day's march, thank Heaven!—Now that child cries!—it really *is* amazing that subalterns *will* marry!—What business have girls to come out and put temptation in one's way?—however, they pay for it—so do we!

Friday.—Got up to Burragaum—no eggs—no milk—a fowl and rice—forgot arrow-root—ditto biscuits—the child crying with hunger, and my wife as cross as the very devil.—Dreadfully rocky road, large stones lying under our feet in all directions. The bearers let the palanquin fall—*once* only—what a squall *she* made!—I only wonder it was not

broken to atoms—what would have become of us!—Wind seems getting up—fear the Monsoon will overtake us—pity it travels so uncivilly fast—wish it would lend us the same conveyance.

Saturday.—As I expected, last night it blew a hurricane—the tent was blown down—could not, for the life of me, imagine where my wife had disappeared—heard her, at last, crying out from beneath a khenaat—fifty yards of tent-cloth being an unpleasant petticoat.—Ground one entire quagmire, where, like Noah's dove, our feet found no resting-place.—Put my wife and child in the palkie, and advised ~~her~~ to be quiet whilst things were putting to rights.—Found half our supplies had been demolished in the storm—pretty prospect!—a week without beer or brandy—wish the Commander in Chief were in my place just now.

Sunday.—Kept our ground all day—weather close and damp, and occasional showers. The Ayah and the Amah quarrelling from morning till this present time of writing—

chatter, chatter, chatter; the worst of it is, no cure is to be expected, for they always contrive to stop short of blows—If they could be excited to *punish* each other!—but that is never to be expected from a Hindoo, man or woman—*baut, baut*, and that is the whole. Rejoiced by the sight of the Tappal—two letters—both duns. The original debt has doubled itself, I find, with their blessed rate of interest!—twelve per cent!—and people cry out against usury laws!—let them come to India. They are so ready to give credit, that one is tempted to extravagance, and marriage, and perpetual exile.

Monday.—Advanced another stage—are likely to remain some time—pleasant rest, indeed! It rained all night; and the natural consequence is, the coming down of the river.—I have tried a mile lower down, and it is not fordable—sweet place for the pitching of our tabernacle, indeed! A rocky plain, a village half a mile off, and a nullah in the way; so the Sepoys are constantly grumbling at the difficulty of getting our supplies.—Baby

ailing—poor little wretch!—this is “to be nursed in the lap” of oriental luxury. The outer khenaut is wet through; and the trench they have dug round, seems threatening to overflow every hour.—I expect to fall into fever; and how to get on, Heaven only knows!—One has nothing left for it, but to fold one’s-self in one’s boat-cloak, and pass away quietly; for the hope of timely medical aid *here* is out of the question—Require an extra glass to keep up the *vis vitae*, and cannot positively afford it, our stock is so reduced.

Tuesday.—River continues impassable; poor child sick.

Wednesday.—Ditto, ditto.

Thursday.—*Ibidem*.

Friday.—Started at three, A. M., report being made that the river was fordable. Bearers, as usual, carried the body of the palkie on their shoulders; nevertheless, my wife got a demi-bath. Came to our ground late, and found the people had pitched at the wrong village, which was deserted, and of course nothing to be obtained in the way of supplies.

Got some rice and dried fish ; obliged to alleviate the child's hunger with congee-water. Could not remain, so sent on the things four miles, and of course got to the ground before the fly was raised — chill, wet, and uncomfortable ; the ground damp, and shivering as if we all had intermittents. Cook came up three hours after ; pretended he had lost his way ; thrashed him soundly, and felt warm and comfortable with the exercise. The man was as drunk as a fiddler, and cooked our wretched dinner so badly as to make “confusion worse confounded.”

Saturday.—Arrived at our ground in tolerable condition—sky cloudless—sun bright—no rain. Found supplies plentiful at the village, or rather town. It appears to have been a place of considerable extent formerly ; fortified stone wall runs mid-way across the hill, which, contrasted with the dense foliage of the topes, in its neighbourhood, is really almost picturesque. We are pitched under the hill, and the ground slopes away from us down to a river, now ample both in width and depth.—

If one could overlook the evils of a march during the monsoon, or were rich enough to travel with all those "appliances and means" that go far towards obviating them, this is really the best season for viewing the country under its most favourable aspect.—Wished to walk out, but the soil being all cotton-ground, found myself very shortly in "the Slough of Despond," and made the best of my way back. Found ourselves rather snug and comfortable, and think of remaining until Monday, to recruit.

Sunday.—If there is a day in which an Indian exile is doomed to feel his distance from home with a keenness and pain that mark it from all other days, it is *this*—Sunday. When does the "chime of Sabbath bells" rouse him from his slumbers? Just when his regiment is at the Presidency—two years out of twenty perhaps. Religion seems to have flown away from this fatal climate. One gets too familiar with death.—I wonder if I can remember the prayer I used to repeat at my mother's knee.—I have had a fit of *mal du pays*

on me all day. I have been away to my own early home :—it is a blessing, that not the walls of a tent—no, not the awful ocean—can keep memory bound. I have been in my father's house in the spring-month of May—when the very wind seemed to breathe more gently on the Sabbath ;—I was in the breakfast-parlour ; it looks out on the little green lawn, with its border of bright and glossy box, and its opposite flower-beds, and the wilderness of evergreen shrubbery beyond. I have seen them all, father, mother, brothers, sisters, when India was to us as a land of dreams. We were all assembled preparatory to going to church, and I heard the cheerful bells, their tunefully monotonous chime coming sweetly to the ear, as the wind bears it over the little river that runs between our house and the church.—What a picturesque church ! all overgrown with ivy and moss, so that the windows are absolutely curtained with it ! The very graves in the churchyard look cheerful, covered with verdant turf, and that “wee modest crimson-tipped flower,” which is sprinkled, like stars, over

every patch of ground in these days of spring-tide. In the evening we rambled through the meadows, by the river, through the woods. Yonder hill is a chronicle of a thousand lessons delivered to us during those Sunday-walks by the affectionate voice of him whose wisdom excelled in reaching our understandings through our hearts. But the hour of awakening from all delightful visions must come—I am always a better man when I can lose the Indian in the Englishman. That moment of awaking to the reality—how bitter it is to leave home again, and feel the desolating curse pronounced on the first wanderer!

Monday.—Beautiful and memorable specimen of native talent and ingenuity! Woke this morning at three o'clock; am not aware that any noise disturbed me. A fine metaphysical inquiry into the extent of instinct, sympathies, and antipathies, might be sufficiently diverting if I had patience for it. Found the corner seam of the khenaut cut open, just at the foot of my couch, and a bullock-trunk abstracted. Rose in alarm and called my wife,

who, naturally enough, went into hysterics, at the consciousness of the thief's former proximity. Gave the alarm, and a hot pursuit commenced. Ascended an adjacent bund, found the trunk broken open, and sundry of its contents scattered about, the thieves having apparently been interrupted in the act of examining the spoil. Recovered the major portion of the wearing apparel, but saw no traces of forty rupees which had been deposited therein. Found on inquiry, that the chain which ought to secure the trunks, had been missing at the last stage. Have not the least doubt one of my own fellows was, if not the perpetrator, at least *particeps criminis*. All attempts at discovering the robbers of course useless; the village police have generally an interest in sheltering them from discovery. In most cases, they receive no inconsiderable dividend from the fruits of iniquity, and give protection in exchange. We have nothing left for it but endurance. The loss is heavy just now, but recovery is hopeless; and if we fixed the theft on one of our own people, his refuge would be

flight, and his services are valuable here, where he cannot be replaced. Oh, for a journey through England, in the mail, on a Macadamized road, even if it were in the character of coachee, or his subaltern, the *guard*!—Question if our cash will carry us to the end of our march, and to get a supply is impossible. My wife miserably low-spirited, and crying after home!

Tuesday.—Got newspapers by Tappal today, and a letter from Andrews — kind, friendly, and just what a brother-officer's ought to be. Invites us to put up in his quarters on joining, until we can find a house. Very glad to find ourselves certain of a shelter; Ann is quite enlivened by the prospect, notwithstanding the retrospect of last night's losses.—Find by the Gazette that Heyland is actually arrived, so have nothing left for it but to look forward patiently to the prospect of his being a dead fixture these next six years. The service gets worse daily, and is now really fit only to be considered a refuge for the destitute. To send here a man with the birth and education of a

gentleman, must be an act of madness. It is to chain him to subalternship and starvation, as well as plague and pestilence.

Wednesday.—Kept awake all last night by the performance of a marriage-ceremony in the village. We were pitched so close as to have the full benefit of their horrible discord.—What is meant by a natural taste for music? Since my arrival in this country, I have begun to suspect it may not be so entirely a gift as one imagines, and that the term, *natural taste*, means, in fact, nothing. Why are the natives so enamoured of tones which are caricatures of the vilest drone of a Scotch bagpipe, mingled with the shrieks of the most unmanageable horn to which stage-coach guard ever applied the force of his lungs? Why are the voices of their public singers, their nautch-girls, so coarse and tuneless, as to out-herod the most ear-piercing dealer in ballads? Since we believe that the organs of human beings have the same construction, why do these Hindoos feel as much disgust in listening to our most eloquent music, as we feel with the wearisome mo-

notony of their limited scale? Yet, they say, that though Europeans may doubtless excel them in their mechanical and scientific skill in almost any other art, the palm of musical superiority must questionless be assigned to these Asiatics! How could Sir W: Jones, having the gift of his two ears withal, permit himself to compose an elaborate essay on the music of the Hindoos?

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.—Made the usual progress with the usual disagreeables—one day so like another that we are obliged to consult the route to know that time is really travelling onward at his usual place. My wife ridicules the attempt at keeping a Journal on a march in India, which, she says, is less ipteresting than a log-book, inasmuch as there is less variation—of the compass, I suppose, she means. But how can I contrive to pass the day otherwise? Hamilton's Gazetteer, and a volume of Sir John Malcolm, will not last for ever, nor can they be always endured.—Now there are great helps towards putting an hour to death, in this attempt at

journalizing. Preparing the paper, pens, and ink, of which the latter is dried up before I am willing to dispense with its aid; then, thinking over all I have *seen* for the sake of discovering what I shall *say*; then reading what has been written in order to avoid repetition, "stale, flat, and unprofitable." In short, I recommend a diary to all travellers by land with tents, going at the rate of ten miles per diem, as the best possible recipe against suicide. It affords a safe vehicle for the passage of all atrabilious vexations and irritabilities: the more caustic your journal, the less danger of its being dull; and the more abusive you are of your enemies in its pages, the better satisfied will you be with yourself in the secret sanctuary of your own heart. Besides, whatever evidence it may afford of your proficiency in *bathos*, it will at least present a durable record to yourself of those "perils of field and flood," which have threatened murder to your talents, if you have any, and shipwreck to your hopes, if you require more solid fulfilment of them than "fool's paradise."

Monday.—Our supplies are on the eve of exhaustion, but luckily we are within five days' march of our destination. Despatched a chit to Andrews, desiring him to send out a cooli, with the needful; found, as soon as I had sent away the letter, that three of my bullocks are completely done up. Have endeavoured to persuade the puttai of the village to press others into our service. Inaccessible to all persuasions, and was obliged to speak to his feelings at last by the medium of two rupees, a species of vernacular which seemed most perfectly comprehensible to him. The bullocks were brought to us with all practicable speed.

Tuesday.—Most disagreeable march. Found that the puttai had *puckalowed* the bullocks from a poor villager, of whose worldly riches they constituted the greater part. The owner followed us the whole day's journey, crying violently, and beating his mouth, after the Hindu manner. In vain I promised him a reasonable remuneration; the more attention I appeared to pay to his lamentations, the louder they became. If there had been any

earthly means of getting the baggage on without the aid of the animals in question, I would gladly have restored them forthwith, for I pitied the hardship put on the man by this Asiatic Dogberry. But what could humanity do in such a case? I was hard of heart "on compulsion," and contrived to keep his ear-harrowing complaints out of my wife's hearing, by riding considerably in advance of her palanquin. I knew that his sorrows would not diminish his speed, and calculated accurately that I should find him at my stirrup on dismounting.—Ascertained as soon as possible that we could procure carriage at this village, and dismissed my noisy follower, with his cattle, considering his journey well repaid by a rupee for *eenam-ke-waste*, and some annas for rice.

Wednesday.—Met our supplies, and a basket of bread from Andrews. What a treat after the indigestible country-biscuits!

Thursday.—All well; shall be with the Regiment, thank God! at sun-rise to-morrow. My wife quite happy, and the poor child quite

well, I wonder what Andrews will think of them! Should not be in the least surprised if he were to marry. It certainly gives a man *respectability*, and shall advise it strenuously.

* * * * *

A LEGEND OF BERAR.

It was a morning delicious as had ever dawned on the fruitful province of Berar. In the month of November the blue of the sky was less deep than in the summer months ; but its radiance was as intense and as unshadowed by a single cloud. There it lay in its repose as an upper ocean, becalmed, clear, glassy, and transparent ; and cool airs breathed beneath it, calling the animal spirits into play, whilst every pulse of Nature seemed to beat healthful music. The sun was vivid, and brilliant still ; but its rays had lost their scorching fervour and their exhausting power. The whole earth was covered with a livery of cheerful and healthful green,—the evidence of the

falling of the rains that had so lately passed away, leaving plenty and fertility in their tract. The whole district was richly cultivated corn and pasture-land, thickly peopled with numerous villages, and the road which wound through it was so well defined as to proye that intercourse was frequent and great.

The summit of one of the loftiest of a range of hills that runs by the village of Ramteek, is crowned by a pagoda of extraordinary note. Hither, at stated seasons, resort princes, nobles, and people, to perform ceremonies, and offer sacrifices in propitiation of the god. And in the evening, during such season, the vast pile, splendidly illuminated, shines like a meteor before the eyes of the distant traveller, to whom, under these circumstances, it is visible when yet many miles divide him from it. Fireworks invade the territories of the night-birds, and at intervals the pale blue lights shed their cadaverous hue over groups of votaries winding in procession up the steep ascent. And well do the revenues of the

priestly Brahmins there testify to the profusion with which the most parsimonious Hindoo will decorate his altars, well satisfied with the profit of such expenditure,—a state of superior enjoyment in his next transmigration.

The festival in the year to which this sketch refers, 17.., had been marked by peculiar splendour. It was the first that had occurred since the accession of the present Rajah, and the dethronement of the late sovereign. Bravely had the unfortunate prince contended for the preservation of his dominions, until gradually his troops, allured by the better fortune of his rival, deserted from his standard, and swelled the host of his foe. Above all, the foul defection of his former favourite and minister, Bheemiah, had so disheartened his few remaining adherents, that even those who were not faithless enough to array themselves against him, were too timid to brave further conflicts, and returned, under the shade of darkness, to their own homes. Alone and helpless, therefore, it seemed that he had bowed to stern necessity,

and sought the shelter of some impenetrable concealment. The fallen prince was heard of no more.

Amidst rejoicings, as loud as they were groundless, the present Rajah ascended the musnud. Bheemiah still continued about the court, but he occupied no distinguished position there. If he had ever entertained hopes that such was to be the reward of his treachery, they were disappointed. Bheemiah was treated by the new sovereign with cordiality, —was the partaker of his master's revelry, the companion of his sports, sometimes the pander to his pleasures, but not his counsellor. And his spirit became dark, for he was ambitious, fond of pre-eminence, above all, a lover of power ; and he ate bitterness, when he felt that *he was used, but he was not trusted.*

The Rajah was a bold and daring man. He chose his ministers with sagacity, and exercised extraordinary sway over the minds of his immediate dependants, by that strength of will and fearlessness of consequences, which assumes the appearance of power of mind, and, for the most

part, produces the same practical effects. Like all monarchs who feel that they hold their possessions by an insecure tenure, he was desirous of attaching to himself a band of firm adherents, in the persons of his army and their leaders. Honours and emoluments, therefore, fell to the share of those whose favour he was, in fact, soliciting, whilst his subjects were ground by a load of oppressive imposts, the produce of which went to defray the expenses of his past war, and to furnish preparations to meet the possibility of a future one. Consequently the nation, in general, were beginning to regret the monarch they had deposed, and to contrast the ease of his peaceful rule with the exactions of these more stirring times. The Rajah was by no means ignorant that the spirit of discontent was abroad, and in every proud throb of his heart he felt, let his rival appear on the stage again, and the results of a conflict might be,—how widely different!

It was the last morning of the festival. The concluding rite had been performed, and the Rajah and his suwarree wound, in long and

magnificent procession, down the sacred precincts of the Temple. A long line of elephants, with their crimson trappings and gilt howdahs, paced slowly and majestically onwards, bearing the prince and his nobles; and there were proud war-horses snuffing the wind, with "thunder on their necks," "smelling the battle afar off," and carrying spear-men, and "men of renown." And then there was a gorgeous cavalcade of scarlet palanquins concealing the Begum and her ladies from the vulgar gaze; and a numerous retinue of guards, with their gay turbans and habiliments, adding to the picturesque variety of the scene. Gaiety was on every brow, whatever might be hidden in the heart, for the Rajah went to hold a feast with his court at his summer palace of Nuggerdund.

Very recently had that fortress, for such it was, been erected, and with eager curiosity the court stopped before the portal to examine its carved ornaments, and to utter such encomiums as are ever ready for the possessions of a prince. The complicated machinery of its fastenings at length permitted their entrance; the dissonant band stationed in a guard-room

above sent forth a crash of sound ; all descended from their various carriages, and with the slow etiquette of an Indian court, entered through an inner door into the gardens.

Every fruit of the season, every flower of the clime, bloomed there. Numerous fountains threw up their glittering waters in the sun, and long terraced walks offered a smooth pathway to the guests. The air was loaded with the richest perfumes of the East, and all things tempted to remain there. But the prince held a durbar in his hall, and all nature's beauties—all the decorations with which art had invested them—became invisible to eyes intent on *advancement*. The throng hastened to the durbar, as insects to the taper ; and the gardens, lovely as they were, were deserted.—

The day had long since waned, and the mirth of the meeting had gradually sunk into silence ; the voice of the nautch was hushed, and the forms which had floated in light were seen no more. It was midnight, and the moon's crescent was on the very verge of the horizon. The starry heavens were looking out on stillness, for of the living things that moved beneath them,

on that spot, none broke the silence, and the uplifted eyes that answered the glances of those stars, seemed *as* pregnant with unutterable mysteries.

On the rampart, so far from the bastion as to be beyond hearing of the sentinel, stood the Rajah ; and by his side, with an air of strong excitement, stood also the once powerful Bheemiah.

The silence was long, and the countenance of the prince gloomed into deeper darkness. At length, suddenly starting into motion, he spoke, as if waking from a trance of thought.

"Bheemiah, thou hast served me well!" he said. "Nay, I read thy reproach of neglect and long forgetfulness. Trust me, it has not been so; but thou knowest, of all men, he who would rule prudently is most fettered. But now, at length, at length, Bheemiah, the hour approaches—the hour *is come*—when thy master shall no more appear ungrateful, even *to thee*, but thou shalt know that he hath measured thy deserts as thou thyself hast measured them, and his payment shall be as boundless as they!"

"The wish of the servant is the will of his master," answered Bheemiah, with oriental submission.

"So would I have it," returned the Rajah, still walking so rapidly that his companion with difficulty maintained his place at his side. "Suppose, then," he continued, "suppose, Bheemiah, that even now, by one single deed, one, too, that would cost thee small pains in the achievement — ask thyself, if thou wert willing to ensure the highest rewards in thy master's gift, and—" the Rajah's voice fell— "to rid thee and him of a fearful and irreconcilable enemy?"

Bheemiah replied not instantly; in his mind he rapidly surveyed the range of past action that might have created such a foe to him; in that survey he saw but *one* fearful shadow, and he felt that danger thence was amongst things impossible.

"I had but *one* such enemy," he replied slowly, "and my Lord knoweth that he is hidden as in the grave."

Again the Rajah walked on silently. The

moon had entirely disappeared, and the faces of the two were concealed from each other in that surrounding darkness.

The Rajah looked upon the form of his companion, and he cursed the gloom. The tongue he trusted rarely ; but *the eye*, he knew its language, and believed it.

" Away, indecision and mystery !" he said at length : " Bheemiah," and his voice sank into hoarse whisper — " Bheemiah, thy betrayed master is at hand !"

The traitor stood lightning-struck.

" All the gods forbid !" he cried : " my lord, my master, knowest thou this, and are we dallying here ?"

" Whither wouldest thou, Bheemiah ?" said the Rajah, laying his hand on his companion, whose steps already retreated : " Tremble not, slave !" he continued angrily, " or, by Siva, thou shalt have cause !"

The panic of the traitor was gone ; self-collected he again awaited the prince's address.

" Dost thou deem me the besotted fool to laugh away in revel a whole day like this,"

resumed the Rajah, "if aught of danger threatened me? All is safe as yet, Bheemiah, and by thy hand all must be maintained in safety."

"Will the prince deign to instruct his servant?" said Bheemiah, gathering confidence as the danger appeared less imminent.

"Thou knowest," said the Rajah, "that despite our bounty, the army is ripe for revolt. The people,—thou hast reported their discontent; the very name of Upoolah would be a war-cry that would gather them to his standard from every village in Berar: therefore, when I tell thee Upoolah is *here*—nay, start not!—dost thou not see that unless he depart speedily, one treacherous whisper of the base slave who feeds him, may raise a host to crush thy master and thyself?"

"Depart!" exclaimed Bheemiah in alarmed surprise; "but *how?* but *whither?* Where is the single spot of earth that may not suffice to bear his standard? Nay, better he were here."

"Or better that—he perished!"

There was silence. At length the Rajah spoke again.

"The work must be done, and thou must do it, Bheemiah! — he must *die*! It boots not now to tell thee how he fell into my lure; sufficient that I have sworn by Gunga my hand shall not harm him; thine, therefore, unfettered by the oath, must do it! Thy wisdom will discern how altogether impossible it is to trust such a deed to a mercenary slave whose next breath betrays it: thou alone, Bheemiah, art he in whom all things concur to render thee the fit agent: thy fear of his future revenge, thy hope of honour and office at my hand—for to what mayest thou not aspire?—all call on thee to shed his blood! It is but a blow—a moment—and 'tis done! But, that thou mayest hesitate no longer, I will show him to thee now, even as he sleeps. Follow me, but speak not."

Silently Bheemiah pursued the footsteps of the Rajah along the rampart; they descended, and, advancing to the centre of the garden,

entered one of those smooth-paved walks that seem made for pleasure alone ; a bowrie terminated it, and the Rajah commenced his descent into its depths by the broad flight of stairs which ran up one of its sides.

Bheemiah followed with a quailing heart. Beyond the influence of the faint light which scarcely rendered the entrance visible, the abyss below was enveloped in the profoundest gloom. Far, far above, the stars were shining out in unsullied splendour, and once or twice, in unfathomable depths, it seemed that the brightness of the shining planets above them was reflected from some transparent surface there. The Rajah at length diverged to the right, and entered a small opening which a faint light from within rendered visible to Bheemiah. In the passive obedience of terror still he followed, and it seemed, as he contemplated the scene on which he suddenly entered, that he was under the influence of some potent spell. The apartment, for such it was, though low, was spacious, and rich carpets from the loom of

Persia covered its pavement, and silken drapery curtained its walls. Ottomans of the same costly material invited to repose; the odour of perfumes was inhaled at every breath, and a banquet of fruits and rich sweetmeats, and ruby-coloured draughts, such as are drunk by the infidel, in vases of the precious metals, seemed to invite them to partake. And through the painted curtain that veiled a distant door, he saw small ferns floating in glittering drapery, and ever and anon a soft voice arose like gentle music, breathing through silence and darkness. "Taste the banquet," said the Rajah, "and fear nothing. This spot is devoted to thy master's *pleasures*; anon, thou shalt see that dedicated to his *passions*."

They feasted there, that sovereign and his slave, and they quaffed the luscious wines, as though they would imbibe thence courage for the deed which was to be done. The Rajah, more inured to such indulgence than his guest, watched calmly and collectedly the kindling of Bheemiah's eye and brow. At

the precise moment when the voice of the tempter might lead to acts of desperation, he arose. He took a small lamp from a niche. "We have no time for words," said he, "once more, follow me!"

Bheemiah rose, scarcely conscious of the object of such mandate. He obeyed, however, and, passing outwards, he found himself again in darkness, for the feeble light the Rajah carried, was not visible on the sudden transition from the splendour within. They resumed their descent, and Bheemiah felt the air blow cold and damp upon his brow, as he gradually sank deeper and more deep beneath the upper earth. Still his heart trembled not, for his pulse throbbed high under unusual excitement, and with an unfaltering footstep he tracked his guide as he diverged to the left, and entered, through a low and vaulted passage, a damp cell in whose vapours the flame of the lamp scarcely survived, and where, but for that feeble light, all had been dark as the sepulchre it seemed.

The Rajah paused, and lowered the lamp ; "Look at thy feet, Bheemiah," said he, "and tell me, who lies there?"

Bheemiah obeyed. He started back. An exclamation of horror escaped his lips.

"The avenger or the victim, which?" said the Rajah, in a whisper, that sounded in the ears of Bheemiah like thunder in the mountains.

There he lay who had been monarch of that fair territory ; he whose frown had once sealed the fate of thousands, whose smile had gladdened as many hearts,—he, the mighty, lay there, manacled in the trappings of a slave ! And still he slept !

"Do thy work quickly," whispered the Rajah, as he placed a dagger in the hand of Bheemiah ; "Be wise, and he shall wake no more."

Under the domination of that superior will the traitor raised his arm. At that instant the eye of the victim opened and glared upon his murderer—in the next the uplifted dagger had entered his heart.

"*He is dead!*" said the Rajah, ere yet Bheemiah fully comprehended that the deed was done. "So perish all our enemies!"

They stood again in the open air, and Bheemiah gasped for freer breath. The Rajah grasped his arm. "By Gunga, I swore that my hand should not be raised on him whom thou hast slain; and that I have not violated my vow, testify thou, Bheemiah. But, traitorous dog, why hast *thou* betrayed thy master's blood? To thee, at least, he had done no wrong, and, therefore, the more art thou accursed! Base slave, witness that I put no confidence in traitors, but ensure thy fidelity—*thus!*"

The body of Bheemiah reeled and fell into the abyss. Once—twice—thrice—there was an echoing sound as of heavy substances in contact; a plunge, a gurgling of parting waters, and then nought but silence and death.

LE VRAI N'EST PAS TOUJOURS LE
VRAISEMBLABLE.

WILMER was the second son of a German Baron of sixteen quarterings. Nothing, perhaps, could have counteracted effectually the Baron's pride of plunging into the unfathomable abyss of genealogy, in the depths of which lay his own antiquity of origin, but the symptoms of approaching starvation, which the empty butteries and unroofed galleries of his dilapidated ancestral castle exhibited. His children got into bad society for the sake of keeping off the two fiends, cold and hunger : they put themselves so far on a level with the yeomen and cotters as to take a seat almost daily at the board of some one of them. The

Baron snuffed the air like a disdainful steed, and looked too high to see their offence. How he contrived to exist, was an enigma that might have puzzled Oedipus; and as our business with him extends only to the fact of his being the father of our friend Wilmer, we shall consign him to the care of his trusty butler, gardener, valet, cook, housemaid, and purveyor,—one multifarious personage, who had the character of making as free with the neighbouring flocks, poultry-yards, barns, &c. as the owners themselves, and in fact enjoyed the fame of being the most successful and adventurous peculator that had ever been known in Germany, which is an assertion of no very ordinary magnitude.

Precisely at the same epoch there was living and fattening on the good things of this world, a person who united in himself every characteristic most decidedly opposite to those which distinguished the Baron; nevertheless these contrasts were the children of the same parents. How and why the younger should have emigrated from the neighbourhood of Stralsburg

to London,—how he prospered there, and attained wealth, and its concomitant, influence, it is not necessary to inquire here. The Baron's dignity had, in former days, cut the connexion, but the Baron's poverty was too glad to renew it when a provision for his unfriended sons was a matter of inevitable necessity. Pride affected to make conditions as to the *mode* in which wealth was to contribute aid, and stipulated for *gentility*. The old merchant and director, compassionating his own blood, as he said, overlooked the presumption of the stipulation,—adopted his nephew and namesake, Frederick, to his particular favour and especial patronage,—sent him as a preliminary measure to the University of Halle, and at nineteen embarked him for India, with the credentials of an Artillery cadetship.

And what did Frederick acquire during his few years of academic life? The classics, perhaps?—or moral or natural philosophy?—or—but why waste time in conjecture? He learned love and mysticism; and which had the greater share in transforming the hardy, robust moun-

taineer into a pale, melancholy, shadowy-looking young man, it might puzzle a metaphysician to determine.

Sophia Sternhof lived just opposite the lodgings of Frederick's great and kind friend, Professor X—. No man was a more devout Kantean than the excellent professor, but he ate and drank like a materialist. So, whilst he slept after dinner, Wilmer occasionally diverted himself by gazing at his *vis-à-vis* neighbour, because all study, he argued,—though it be the fascinating knowledge of transcendentals,—requires relaxation. Perhaps the fine display of roses and other flowers in the opposite balcony was his first attraction: no matter,—there was cause and effect, and very soon Wilmer saw amongst those flowers only the combination of all their graces in Sophia. All the world knew that Madame Sternhof was a cripple; her misfortune was the result of a long attendance on this only child during a very severe and threatening malady. She was a widow, and she was poor;—her circumstances and her malady conducted equally to her seclusion. Sophia was

never to be seen in the places of public resort ; she was a violet blooming the more sweetly for the shade that embosomed her, for she caught only the first and the last rays of the sun in retired walks before Madame Sternhof rose in the morning, or during her afternoon's siesta.

Sophia was a German, but her features and complexion were not national. She had the darkest hair and eyes, an oval face, features of Grecian outline, and a fair pale cheek, resulting perhaps as much from confinement and circumstance as from constitution. She was tall, but her perfect proportions gave her figure the most feminine elegance, and her step was light and sylph-like. She was often occupied amongst the roses of her balcony, and though at first she retired, on perceiving to what point the intense gaze of the student was directed, she became used to it at length, and, in short, it was not long before he walked by her side during her evening airings, and a few months were sufficient to plunge them into the depths of a pure and first attachment.

We might linger here, in this holiest sanctuary of life's best feelings, but sketchers must pass rapidly over the most beautiful details, to bring out the stronger and more marked features of the picture. Wilmer's attachment acquired much of its peculiar character from those pursuits to which it acted as light to shade. Sophia's mind was of a lofty tone, and responded to the enthusiasm of his own. She delighted to participate in his visionary theories of the soul, and to plunge with him into conjectures of the unknown world of phantasm and shadow. But her enjoyment in the inquiry differed widely from his. She was too much occupied with the every-day business of life,—the details of domestic economy, and tender attendance on her sick parent, to find that plenitude of leisure which might have given these speculations a more forcible character. She was always under a counteracting influence, and amused herself with these illusions of fancy, as with a beautiful poem or romance that might touch her heart, or affect her imagination, without warping her reason.

But Wilmer's mind had not a refuge in this counteraction. His philosophy, if we are to imitate him in calling it by that name, mingled with his love, and his love encouraged the mysticism of his philosophy ; both had a characteristic of melancholy grandeur, for he viewed the soul of her he loved as connected with that mysterious and eternal future, into which human thought pierces only to tremble. And this was the current of his life.

But existence was only to be dreamed away for a short period. He *must* rouse and bestir himself,—take *his* part in the actions of mankind ; and like a sleeping sailor, suddenly summoned to his post on the deck, must encounter with his fellows the united influence of wind, wave, and darkness.

The Lombard-street Wilmer required the immediate presence of his nephew in London. The cadetship awaited his arrival, and,—and in short the one great conviction on the mind of Frederick was,—thousands of leagues of land and ocean were about to divide him from Sophia—for ever !

Yes, for ever ! In his despair, the distance and the time seemed extended beyond human calculation. It was infinity—it was eternity,—a future of darkness, whether in life or death, mysterious and unknown.

He did, for a moment, indulge the wish—the hope, that Sophia would accompany him to the far-off world for which he was destined. One word from her was sufficient to crush that single blooming hope,—to break that one line of light. Could she desert her mother?—render the widow childless?—the poor destitute?—the infirm helpless? Wilmer hated himself that he had asked such a sacrifice; a thousand vows were exchanged, hours of pain and agony wept away—and they parted.

Sophia had a certain round of duties to perform, which compelled a diversion from the one dominant idea, that at first threatened to become too exquisitely painful for endurance. But poor Wilmer was delivered over to the monotony of a five months' abiding on the weary world of waters. The novelty of the routine of a ship life,—the wonders, to his in-

experienced eye, of nautical management,—furnished some occupation for the few first days; but as the vessel neared the line, when the frame was relaxed by the heat, and the mind, by inoccupation, left to prey upon itself, his curiosity was satiated, and an overwhelming feeling of desolation threw a deeper shade of dreariness over the interminable ocean around him. Some of his companions were coarse and uncultivated, some profligate. Others were educated indeed, but they had no sympathies with Wilmer's peculiar modes of thinking and feeling; and with that shrinking delicacy of mind which plunges its possessor into solitude, and sometimes into misanthropy, he believed that by shunning intimacy he escaped ridicule. Thus secluding his peculiar pursuits in the sanctuary of his own bosom, he surrendered himself to their enjoyment with passionate ardour, and enshrined amongst them the image of Sophia, which illuminated the temple with its own light,—beautiful and poetical, if pale, and melancholy.

No man ever possessed more intense consci-

ousness of intellectual existence, or more devout faith in the spiritual peopling of the regions of air around him. The sails white and shroud-like, under the midnight moon, seemed like the tall spectres of the deep; the very waves, as they rolled on in their might, appeared to him heaving beneath the footsteps of beings of power and intelligence beyond that of man. The desire of penetrating the future, common to all mankind, was intense in such a temperament as Wilmer's. He saw omen and prodigy in the shapeless clouds, to him pictures shadowing forth the unknown, through which he was hereafter to pass. Melancholy blended with all his visions. He shaped images of woe in every phantasm of his imagination; and, as a friend said of him afterwards, his mind seemed to awake only at midnight, and to be torpid beneath the enlivening influence of the sun.

The night that preceded his landing he passed on deck. It was the full-moon, and the whole atmosphere was filled with its beautiful light, brilliant beyond the experience of the travellers in more northern latitudes.

Sometimes soft white clouds sailed across the sky, slowly and solemnly as if, Wilmer thought, they were moving to the music of a death-anthem. His soul was impatient of the restraints of mortality, and strained after the knowledge of mysteries hereafter to be revealed. As the dreamer gazed upwards, he saw a white but dense cloud rising from the west, like a shadow darkening the horizon. It came slowly upwards, and as it neared the zenith, it broke into a hundred lesser bodies, which, to his eye, assumed human form and likelihood. He saw drawn out in long array, a funeral procession; he watched it as it moved slowly onwards, and as he gazed, seeming to himself sensible of its near approach, it dissolved, and the whole arch was one clear unsullied sheet of blue and brightness. He arose hastily, in the fear of a supernatural presence, and he felt it borne on his mind strongly and irresistibly, that he had witnessed the burial of his beloved.

How far a youth so gifted, and so bewildered by poetical fancies, was qualified to sustain a part in Indian life, where all worldly wisdom

is honoured, and all enthusiasm scorned unutterably—those can best tell who have had fatal experience of the depressing effects of that life on the intellect. He was sent to a corps, where for many months he had no companions, and where too late, he found a real friend.

His correspondence with Sophia was punctual, but then a weary year must elapse before he could receive her answer to each letter. He loved her fervently, ardently as ever. But his mind was devouring itself. Beyond the reach of access to books, satiated with his own limited store, not only indifferent to, but actually averse to field-sports, existence became daily less tolerable, and he fell into guilt to avoid the horrors of that loneliness which threatened him with the grave.

How a man of cultivated mind and high endowments can descend to a tie with a female whose manners, heart, everything, contain the elements of all that, in theory, most disgusts him, is one of those effects

—“In which the burden of the mystery
Of all this unintelligible world”

is, perhaps, felt most bitterly. It is true, Orissa had exceeding beauty, and the grace of form peculiar to Indian women, to attract the senses. There was no suspicion of impurity attached to her till now; she was the orphan of a deceased Subidar, and perhaps Wilmer viewed her as one whom he himself had despoiled. Was he happy in his new connexion? Let him answer who, not yet lost to virtue, has foully wronged the one confiding and faithful heart that has trusted its sum of happiness to his keeping, and lives hopefully, if not happily, in the conviction of his unswerving fidelity.

Pain, acute and remorseful, mingled with his expectation of Sophia's letters. There was even a feeling, unacknowledged perhaps to his own heart, a feeling of relief, if they came not. And yet "he had not forgotten his first love." All the worthy tenderness of his heart was fully engrossed by her, but he knew in what he had offended, and he shrank from the close contemplation of the difference between her heart and his, which those letters of pure and devoted affection forced on him.

The brightness of Sophia's prospects in Germany had not increased since they parted. "My dear mother," she wrote in one of her letters, "grows weaker daily. Every morning I think I perceive a diminution of health in her countenance, and the accents of her voice falter when she blesses me. Ah, if it would please God to spare my dear parent to me, I would regret your absence less, Frederick, than I have been wont to do. The secret repining of my heart at our separation, was indeed greater than I ever cared to confess to you, and the fading colour of my poor mother's cheek is a painful reproach to me. If she does but regain some portion of her health, I will indeed strive to bear with more fortitude a sorrow which I fancy I have hitherto cherished. Indeed, dear Frederick, I felt as if to be happy, were treason to you, and approached to forgetfulness. As if your Sophia could forget! Oh, no, neither of us can forget how dear we have been to each other! how dear we are! But do not let the thought of me ever cause you one painful moment. Rather take comfort in re-

remembering that there exists one being, whose highest earthly hope is that she will one day, far distant as it may be, find her felicity in contributing to yours."

" Dearest Frederick," said another letter, " I have been long without writing to you, and I scarcely know why I should write now. I have tried to hide what I feel, and almost think it wrong to cast the shadow of my grief over your path. But indeed, Frederick, I feel my utter loneliness so painfully, that I am *driven* to write to you, as the only refuge from the sorrows that oppress me. I know that I am constantly in the awful presence of *death*, and if the blow be not already dealt, he is not the less near. This is so awful a thought, dear Frederick ! and I see my mother's face pale as if his shadow lay*on it. My dear, dear mother, why did I ever grieve when my heart could entertain a reasonable hope of your being spared to me for years? Why did any other thought ever cause me a sigh or a tear? I often dwell on the conversations we used to hold together, Frederick ; perhaps we were wrong in

endeavouring to penetrate into mysteries beyond this sphere of existence, farther than has been revealed. It is a dark and awful valley that separates life from death, and what matters it to us whether it be peopled, and with what? I am, indeed, not happy; I seem always to hear the thunder, and to be within reach of the lightning."

"The stroke has fallen," she wrote again. "You will grieve for me; my dearest mother died three months since. You will not wonder that I have not written before; indeed I have not had the heart to do so; it seemed to me a treason to her memory to think of any subject connected with hope. But now, I come to you for advice and direction, which our engagement and our affection gives me a right to ask, and you a right to afford. You know the small income on which we formerly subsisted was only a pension for my mother's life—consequently, now it is withdrawn; and the little fund she so carefully accumulated for me, together with the produce of our household furniture, will afford me the means of existence only during a

few months. There is, therefore, but a choice of *dependence*; do you point out such a mode in which my exertions shall be made, as will be least disagreeable to you. My cousin, the banker's wife, at Leipzig, has written to offer me the advantage of her protection, as instructress to her five children. I am going to her directly, and shall await your reply there. I do not think any plan could be more acceptable to you than this; and you will be comforted by knowing that, if I be dependent, it is on my own kinswoman. Besides, life is not all roses.⁷

"*Life is not all roses!*" sighed Wilmer, as he finished the last letter. The death of Mrs. Sternhof affected him painfully, but the disposal of Sophia was a much more interesting point to be considered. The irrevocable past was beyond his power, and he set himself seriously to decide on his views for the future.

Amidst all the difficulties of the situation in which folly and frailty had placed him, let it not be supposed that Wilmer for a moment hesitated on deciding that his union with Sophia

should be effected with all possible speed. A very little calculation sufficed to show, how much less expensive and difficult her coming out to India immediately would be, than his returning to England for the purpose of escorting her. If he were indeed able to obtain a year's furlough on "urgent private affairs," he would draw no pay during that period, and he must incur a large debt to defray his contingent expenses; whereas, it would not be difficult to borrow a sum sufficient for Sophia's outfit, which, by severe economising during the interval of the passage of his letter to England, and her voyage out, he felt confident he should be able to repay before her arrival. This plan was carried into instant execution ;—the money, after some demurs on the part of Agents, procured by effecting an insurance of his life, and despatched with an invitation ardent, pressing, and, as appeared from the result, irresistible.

Thus far Wilmer's plan had advanced rapidly and easily to execution. But by far the most difficult task remained ; he felt it imperative on him, by honour, principle, even inclina-

tion, to dissolve instantly and for ever his unhappy connexion. Aware with what too great indulgence this sin is regarded in India, he felt the less reluctance to ask the aid and advice of Captain Aubrey, who commanded the troop of Horse Artillery to which Wilmer had been removed. Captain Aubrey was married, and had offered his house as a residence for Sophia on her arrival, as soon as he heard of Wilmer's project. To him, therefore, Wilmer applied for two months' leave of absence, and to him he resigned the power of terminating a thraldrom the yoke of which became every hour more galling.

Wilmer had been absent about a fortnight when he received the following letter from Captain Aubrey:—

"**MY DEAR WILMER,**

"In the first place, let me relieve your mind by telling you, you are free. The girl has left your house for ever, I trust. I have disposed of a sum in her behalf, which will produce her ten rupees a month for her life,

put out to usury after the native fashion. This will be done by an agent over whom I shall be always able to keep an eye; for, *sub silentio sit*, he belongs to the troop; and depend on it if there is any failure in punctuality on his part, we shall hear of it.

"I need not relate to you all my arguments and persuasions, because to me 'nothing so tedious as a twice-told tale.' You may imagine the violence of a native woman, and the superior energy of her language, which, you know, is on no occasion limited by the restraints of common decency. She threatens you with all manner of evil and vengeance; and I hear she was making *pooja* at the Swamme-house on the left of our lines, a few nights since, to call down mischief and punishment on you. There is one point on which you may set your mind at ease: Hall recognised her when she visited my verandah the other day; he swears she lived with Jones of the 81st, before she was fourteen; he spoke to her, and she received him with all the ease of an old acquaintance. Her father, it is true,

was a Subidar, but a Pariah ; he got his promotion in days of yore when we looked less to a Sepoy's caste than now ;—so, you see, she had no caste to violate. In every respect you are well rid of her, for, setting aside the superior beauty of her person, she is one of the worst of her species I ever happened to meet.

“ You have suffered so much on account of this unhappy affair, that your own mind has already suggested more admonitions than my lazy pen is likely to afford you. Seriously, however, my dear Wilmer, unfavourable as I consider life in this country to a young man's intellectual advancement, this inconvenience becomes nothing when I regard the infinitely more serious depravity which it has a tendency to produce in his moral character. Viewing crimes of this kind as, if evil, necessary, his moral sense very soon becomes so obtuse that a violation of the holiest sanctions of civilized society may come to be regarded by him in the light of a venial offence. Besides, if no worse result were to be feared, the intimate

association with beings, the degradation, the refuse of their sex,—having nothing of woman but the form,—must have an irresistible tendency to brutify the heart and destroy the understanding. I wish no cadet came out before he was twenty, and every one married. If I had a voice in the legislature, I would vote to establish it by Act of Parliament.

"I have concluded, you see, with an opinion worthy of a married man. However, as I hope soon to greet you a member of the fraternity, I need not apologise for sentiments, the justice of which I think you will at this moment most particularly approve.

Ever, my dear Wilmer,

Yours most sincerely,

C. AUBREY.

"P.S. I forgot, as usual, to give you Mrs. Aubrey's best salam. I know she feels more than usually well-disposed towards you just now, in the prospect of your providing her with a suitable companion.—G. O. in yesterday. Always reduction! If the system goes on, we may content ourselves with curry and

rice, for we shall get nothing beyond it. It would not become *me*, in my position of Commandant, to give evil counsel, otherwise I almost think I should advise a mutiny."

Wilmer was well satisfied that he had thus finally shaken off the trammels of his culpable connexion, but he felt some of those uncomfortable *misgivings*, if I may call them so, which invariably attend the commission of wrong. He resolved to remain absent during the whole of his two months' leave, trusting that, the *habit* of separation once fixed, he should escape future annoyance.

He returned at length, with a thankful but not a joyful heart. Solitude was always unfavourable to a temperament so predisposed to melancholy, and an intellect whose favourite exercises were in the most mysterious department of human conjecture. Captain Aubrey, suspecting something of the nature of his pursuits, and sincerely anxious for his happiness, with all the frankness of Indian hospitality, offered him the closest intimacy in his domestic

circle. Wilmer's bungalow was in the adjoining compound, and after this period he became in fact an inmate at his friend's.

With the pertinacity which distinguishes these unhappy creatures, the discarded woman sometimes found means of approaching Wilmer. In his solitary morning's walk she occasionally presented herself before him with prostration, and tears, and all that is in fact "part of the vocation" of her class. But when Wilmer, by repeated resistance, proved himself invulnerable, and resigned his early sauntering abroad, her attacks assumed a different character; she came boldly to his house with threats, violence, and outcries,—calling down vengeance, and menacing him with the infliction of it. Captain Aubrey's interference was, at first, ineffectual; and it was not until the withdrawing of her stipend for two or three months that she finally retreated, and left Wilmer to comparative tranquillity.

The succeeding interval was, however, one of great anxiety. Prone always to view the future as approaching in clouds and darkness,

the heart of Wilmer was often overwhelmed with doubt and anguish. He hesitated to admit the belief that Sophia would indeed have courage to venture unprotected on a voyage to this distant land. He feared the opposition of her relation, and even if all these obstacles were finally overcome, he dreaded the effect this uncongenial climate might have on a constitution naturally delicate. If truth must be told, his most intimate presages were all of evil, but their shape was indistinct as the shadow that is mingling with surrounding gloom. The strong common-sense, the raillery, and the constant society of Captain Aubrey, the kindness and good feeling evinced by his wife, and his being led as much as possible to the most enlivening amusements the place afforded, were, however, effectual in preserving generally the equipoise of his mind.

At length one cause of doubt and agitation was removed. He received a letter from Sophia.

"Yes, I am indeed coming to you, dear Frederick; but I do not know that I should

have ventured on such a step, uninfluenced by the representations, I may add, the *commands* of my relation. She advocates the measure on the grounds that you urge it,—the saving of expense. However, I will not now tell you every argument that has been advanced; I write this from London, as the date and the postmark will tell you, having been conveyed hither by my relation's brother and agent in this great metropolis. I may consider, therefore, that my voyage has already commenced, since I have quitted my country. My passage is taken on board the —, which sails early in next month, and I shall have the advantage of the protection of Mrs. Z. on board, who is a friend of my host's, and to whose acquaintance I have already been introduced.

"I bring with me, dear Frederick, a heart unchanged in warm affection to you, but, at present, sad and desponding. You will not find my person improved; but if you think me paler and thinner, you will remember that I have passed through some suffering since we parted, and will not love me less for the change.

I own, however, that I wish we had once met again, and at least resumed our acquaintance."

"Ah, how well I can understand that feeling, poor girl!" said Mrs. Aubrey, to whom extracts of Sophia's letter were read. Pleased with the simplicity, purity, and affection those extracts expressed, Mrs. Aubrey became more deeply interested in the future bride of her friend, and prepared for her reception with a consideration that regarded equally the feelings of Sophia, and the estimation to be obtained for her from the world.

Captain Aubrey had a brother at the Presidency, and he and his excellent wife found it particularly expedient that they should visit him just at this juncture, so that, as they told Wilmer, they should be able to afford Sophia protection and a home immediately on her landing. By this means also, they suggested, he would be spared the necessity of applying for leave, and incurring the additional expense of the journey.

Wilmer felt—how deeply did he feel!—this real kindness. Impatient as he was to greet

his Sophia, he was conscious of all the additional respectability that would attend his union, if she were received by Mrs. Aubrey, and made the journey to his present station in her society and under her protection. Lover-like longings were not for a moment to be put in competition with these solid advantages, and gladly, gratefully, he testified his assent.

They departed, Captain Aubrey and his family, and never had solitude seemed to Wilmer so sad, or time so tedious. Reading was out of the question, and he had few companions. Of those few, the want of intelligence was more apparent than ever : never had the climate appeared so terrible, the country so unalluring; but even suspense, all-lingered as it is, and slow as are its haunted footsteps, must cease ; Wilmer received a letter from Mrs. Aubrey.

" The — came in sight the evening before last ; yesterday morning her passengers disembarked, and amongst them, Aubrey greeted on the deck of the ship, your Sophia.

" For once, love has not exaggerated ; she is indeed beautiful, graceful, simple, attractive :

expect many rivals. You know, a new face in India, that is barely tolerable, is a great attraction, and *this* creature, we may be quite convinced, will have some of our dignitaries at her feet with all possible dispatch. If her mind prove equal to the idea conveyed by her entire manner, you have nothing to fear from the glittering temptation, and, perhaps, hereafter you may find a cause of happiness in her having been exposed to it. However, Aubrey will not leave the Presidency—(Can you forgive him?)—until the monsoon is fairly over ; that is to say, at the expiration of three entire months."

Wilmer did feel it hard to endure this "hope deferred," even whilst he acknowledged the wisdom and real kindness that prompted his friend's designs ; he had, however, too much virtue, and, perhaps, too little courage, to offer any opposition, and he remained solitary whilst those three months wore lingeringly away.

It must be confessed his patience was rewarded by frequent letters from Sophia : those

letters were indeed so delightful, that it may be doubted if he did not secretly acquiesce in the sentiment, that it is worth while to separate from the objects of attachment to experience the exquisite pleasure derivable from their correspondence.

Sophia came through the ordeal pure and unsullied by one regret that she was the destined bride of a subaltern. We pass over the splendid temptations offered to her, and see her at length safely domesticated with Aubrey at the head-quarters of his troop, and enjoying daily the society of Wilmer.

The day of their union was fixed, and it was a week distant; every anxiety seemed banished from the heart of Sophia, in the fulness of her present happiness. There was the deep and luxurious repose that succeeds tumult and extreme agitation; her hopes were on the eve of realization, and her wishes seemed bound up in a golden certainty. Wilmer, too, felt that happiness was all around him, and if sometimes a shade of melancholy did cross his brow, or a thought of sadness his heart, the smiles and

tenderness of Sophia speedily restored his tranquillity, if they did not excite him to a vivacity with which, in truth, his nature was almost unacquainted.

It was one of those brilliant evenings peculiar to southern climes ; the whole landscape was bathed in the softest and clearest moonlight : every object was as distinctly visible in its form as by day, and the absence of colour, the striking contrast of light and shade, gave solemnity to the scene. Sophia and Wilmer had strolled through an avenue bounded on either side by plantains and guayas, and they now reposed in an open verandah, looking out upon the garden before them, filled with eastern shrubs, and plants, and fruits — the white-thatched bungalows speckled around — the clear river, filled with the recent rains, each ripple crested as with a jewel, as it reflected back the moon's ray ; and if they sighed at contrasting the Oriental character of the scene with their own European home, they felt likewise that they were *together*, and wished not, asked not, for change.

Aubrey and his wife joined them, and they conversed playfully. Wilmer, for once, seemed to deliver himself up entirely to happiness: he was unusually cheerful, and when Mrs. Aubrey afterwards dwelt on that evening, she confessed that Wilmer was so unlike himself, that his vivacity had impressed her mind with a pain almost like an acute pang inflicted on her body.

By degrees Sophia became less animated; but as the others were conversing with great eagerness, her complete abstraction was not at first perceived: Wilmer was the first to be conscious of it, and, looking in her face, his own reflected back its extreme paleness.

"Heavens, Sophia, you are very ill!"

He clasped her hands in his. They were cold and damp. Mrs. Aubrey, roused by his evident alarm, rose also: "My dear Sophia, what is the matter?"

"I do not know;—I cannot tell;—it was a sudden pang,—a faintness,—a numbness, a—
a—Wilmer! oh, Wilmer!" and she fell back in his arms.

Wilmer was nearly as powerless as his fainting bride. Aubrey took her in his arms and carried her into the house. He exchanged a look with his wife, that revealed at once all he knew, and all he feared. The nature of the attack was not to be mistaken.

Medical aid was almost instantly administered. Wilmer, scarcely conscious of anything that was occurring, paced the garden, with his hands pressed on his hot brow, gazing upwards with his burning eyes, sensible of pain and anguish, but bewildered *wherefore and why*.

There were symptoms not to be mistaken; but there were others as inexplicable. "What I can comprehend of this case," said the Surgeon to Mrs. Aubrey, "threatens nothing fatal; but there are symptoms apparent that lead me to suspect the illness of our patient to have been produced by causes purely external. Has she eaten anything unusual,—anything more than is generally on your table?"

"Nothing. I remember nothing," said Mrs. Aubrey, dreadfully agitated; "surely, surely, Doctor, you suspect nothing *very*—that is—"

"We must endeavour to ascertain what has been taken," he returned evasively : "I will see Wilmer ; perhaps he may be able to elucidate what, I confess, embarrasses me."

It was some minutes before Wilmer could be made to comprehend the nature of the questions asked by the Surgeon. At length he said he had brought her some *bon bons*, in the manufacture of which one of his servants was very skilful ; that Sophia had frequently before eaten them, without any bad effect, and in larger quantities, for she had reserved a great portion of these for the children.

Doctor V. desired to see what remained.

When they were produced, he examined several closely and minutely. "Send for your boy," said he to Wilmer ; "I wish to ask him a question."

But the boy was no longer to be found ; and now that discovery seemed at hand, as is usual with natives of this class, each individual of Wilmer's household had something to disclose of the absentee, which had never before been suspected.

He had been Wilmer's favourite attendant ; his dressing-boy,—always about his person. It now appeared that he had also been so high in the favour of the unfortunate and guilty woman, formerly living with Wilmer, that it was no secret to his fellow-servants that he was her paramour.

Moreover, it was ascertained, that she had, for several days, been lurking in the neighbourhood of Wilmer's compound,—that Mootasawny had had repeated interviews with her,—and that on one occasion he had gone to sleep before his master's return from Captain Aubrey's at night, being intoxicated,—that before he slept he had talked strangely, and had told them, “never any good when Mistress come ;—better not let come ;—Master good, quiet gentleman ;—what for Mistress want ?—not let come.”

The evidence was more than sufficient to corroborate the suspicions of Doctor V. He was quite sure that some noxious drug or herb had been administered, and with inexpressible

grief he was obliged to confess that the disease was beyond the power of his art.

Wilmer admitted the conviction in all its depth of darkness and of horror ; Sophia was dying,—and link by link he traced the chain of the tragedy to the first moving cause,—his own guilt. He was very calm,—so calm, that no opposition was made to his being present by the dying couch of Sophia.

The face was fearfully changed ; the whole frame was collapsed in a degree that seemed the effect of years of disease, rather than of a few minutes. She smiled gently when she became conscious that Wilmer was near, but generally she lay in a state of quiet, resembling torpor.

Her hand lay in his,—passive and cold as if already that of a corpse, except when a convulsive pressure and a correspondent contraction of feature, indicated a spasm of pain. Towards the last her eye gained an expression of strong consciousness. She looked round at Mrs. Aubrey,—at Aubrey,—and smiled peace-

fully and gratefully. That dark and intellectual eye looked more brightly and tenderly than ever, as it poured its glance of parting love on the one being who had excited the first—the last passion of her pure heart. The lips moved, but "*Wilmer!*" was scarcely audible. His arms encircled her in an instant. His cheek rested against hers,—he felt her breath pass sighingly over it, and the spirit of Sophia had departed !

As soon as possible, after a long and dangerous illness, Wilmer went to Europe on sick certificate; his kinsman was dead, and had bequeathed to him a moderate competence, which enabled him to dedicate himself to the profound retirement he coveted. In a small house at Halle, once occupied by Madam Sternhof, lived years afterwards, a melancholy man, generally considered insane, at once shunning and shunned. The poor were well acquainted with him and his haunts, but, though he was suspected of an over great acquaintance with books, he was unknown both to the rich and

the learned. His only attendant was the nurse of Sophia, whose fidelity, if he trusted her, was inviolable, for he was never betrayed. He was found dead one morning in a little arbour, the erection of which was well known to have been a favourite amusement to Sophia Sternhof, "who had gone far away." He was buried in the adjacent church-yard, in the corner shaded by the large and pale ash-tree, where no head-stone records his name, his misfortunes, or his crimes.

LETTER FROM CALCUTTA.

"MY DEAR K—,

"BEHOLD me very safely deposited,—after sundry tossings by land and water, by the combined efforts of palankeen bearers, boatmen, and the wind,—in my own garden-house, on the banks of the broad and brilliant Ganges, —once again a suburban of the City of Palaces. In spite of your well-remembered hospitality, I look back without regret on the moment of my departure from your tongue-tied,—that is, press-tied,—Presidency. I eat my breakfast with keener zest now it is accompanied by some Journal, in which men dare declare boldly that which the charter of their birth commands them to think. You know this in-

volves the subject of a long-standing controversy between us, but now that I have again planted my foot beneath the shadow of comparative liberty,—hugging its blessings to my bosom,—I challenge you to show me one single bad consequence resulting from a press in Calcutta as unfettered as any reasonable man could desire. On the contrary, are not its benefits exhibited in the improved tone of society,—the *dawning* cultivation of indigenous talent,—the absence of many evils which have been brought by this medium, to the notice of those within whose power lay redress,—and with whom to *perceive* has been to *remove*? Trust me, old Indian as I am, and knowing as I do the delicacy and frangibility of those links by which society is here, in an especial manner, holden together, none less than I would advocate the degrading of the public press into a vehicle by which mean and malignant minds might, under anonymous shelter, inflict those wounds for which their swords are *all too rusty*. Not thus! Sacred for ever be the sanctuary of private life!—uninvaded the territory of each

man's hearth-stone ! But the actions of public servants are public property, and no man holds office exempt from this condition. The press, therefore, the organ of the public, has the right of stamping them with the brand of shame, or crowning them with the laurel coronal, as is meetest for their deservings. Woe to the ruler who dreads the truth from the tongue of an honest man, and seeks his security in the insane impolicy of a gag ! Your press is a blot on your society, which spreads a shade of darkness over the whole surface. Its servility is despicable; the original matter of its effusions execrable; its extracts directed by the most partial illiberality. On the contrary, here, *at present*, the press is worthy British editors, and does not disgrace the mother tongue. Therefore we ask nothing beyond actual enjoyment, but the security of its permanence. We are thankful for the *boon*, but we demand the *right*. We deny that we ought to be put in the condition of receiving by act of grace, a property fraudulently withheld from us. True, that we have no cause to complain under

the administration of our present high-feeling and liberal-minded Governor-General ; but *all* Governors-General number not these qualities amongst their especial prerogatives. We have had woeful experience that they are subject to all the infirmities that 'flesh is heir to,' and, above all, we dread the short-lived but severe despotism of an interregnum. We feel the pain of old but not forgotten wounds,—at changes of weather and similar unpleasant occasions. Time, the great "EDAX," will, I trust, set his scythe to this as to many other *mown-down* prejudices, too long bound upon a timid, shrinking world. As to you, you appear to have forgotten the great political and moral truth, that subjects are, at least, as much in fault as rulers, when the one oppresses, and the other groans, indeed, but, whilst he groans, obeys !

"My dear K——, I wish you would show yourself amongst us, that you might see with your eyes, and confess with your lips, that there *are* choice spirits even in this Indian world,—not by twos and threes, but by dozens

and scores. There is ——, but no!—come and see them bodily;—come, and thenceforwards deny that human intellect does indeed perish here;—that the tone of our society is so grossly sensual as to drive from its sphere all that is intellectual,—all that is allied to the nobler part of man. Tremble not that you shall be conducted to a festal board, for the furnishing forth of which whole herds and flocks have been slaughtered. ‘We order these things better now.’ There is less of *official* in the tone of our friendly meetings, and we do not put each other to death if a transgression of the laws of precedence should chance to occur. We do not measure our appreciation of men by the date of appointments and commissions, or by the number of units that describe our annual receipts. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* We respect talent, and we listen to it with attention, even if it should wear but the insignia of subalternship. We do not think a bit the more highly of a man’s virtues or genius, because he writes ‘honourable’ to his name, or holds a province at

his beck. We are beginning to receive it as an article of faith, that the moral idiosyncrasy of the individual is worth more of our observance than the accidents of his externals. We have done with drinking,—and gaming is pronouncing its final imprecations in blushful whispers. We read,—we think,—and we publish. Conversation, at least, fairly *contests* the ground with the bubbling, murmuring lullaby, of the somniferous hookah. Our women have got beyond the accidence of female intellect,—the fashion of a new turban, and the piquancy of the last *Leadenhall-street* novel, or *liaison*. Scandal there is,—if not so much or so loud as of yore,—still enough to make an honest man bless himself that he is not—*woman!* We live so much with open doors,—and it requires so little exertion for our neighbour to peep into the arcana of our establishment,—that at idle hours, for such will occur even to the ‘sensible and reflecting part of the world,’ we are apt to look, and to communicate the result of our observations. ‘ “Tis true, ’tis pity, pity ’tis, ’tis true.’ But, as the schoolmaster hath

really put on his seven-league boots, and looked in on us, we trust that beneath his gentle castigations, this evil also will, in the course of two or three thousand centuries, be put to death. Meanwhile, let us comfort ourselves with what there is of bright in the present.

"A Calcutta RE-UNION! — Did not you read the account of it in the journals with sparkling eyes, and mouth watering? Did not you picture to yourself, beauty discarding the tawdry ornaments which, for the most part, disfigure her in all public exhibitions,—arrayed *simplex munditiis*, — and disdaining not to contribute,—noble, perchance, and bright as lovely,—*her quota* to the more refined pleasures of the evening? Did not your heart yearn to him, the author of that pleasant charade, which was acted to the life, by yonder two or three non-professing amateurs? And did not your fancy linger on the dying notes of that thrilling syren, who so charmed our listening ear, that even applause was hushed in hope of more,—in reluctance to believe that those honey-dropping tones had ceased to fall

upon our sense? And did you not desire to catch the sparkling *bon-mot*, as it added that Attic salt to the light repast, which just *sustains* not *satiates*? Such an assembly, my friend, is choice enough for the most fastidious abhorrence of grossness and vulgarity. It is meet for the choicest epicure of society, and as it does not invite the presence, cares little for the censure of those, who merit the cognomen of its *gluttons*.

"Have you seen our New Annual?—No! Then, as I am anxious to contribute largely to your delight, I shall send you a copy by Bangy. Do not you, men of Madras, droop with shame, not only that there is no spirit of emulation in you, but none of *encouragement*? that as you are not the Virgils, you are unwilling to become the Mæcenases of literature; and that, from want of sufficient patronage, this little star of the Indian Press is likely to be seen no more above the horizon? Oh, most worthy and most *asinine* public of ——! But I have done.

"I meant to have been *descriptive* on many

and various subjects connected with this lordly capital, but I have, at the same time, exhausted my paper and my patience. Yours, I guess, is pretty considerably worn out also; therefore, until I am again 'i' the vein,' believe me, &c. &c. &c."

NOURMAHAL.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

AMONGST the very few females who have sustained a distinguished rôle in the generally sanguinary drama of Indian History, the name of Nourmahal stands pre-eminently conspicuous.

Chaja Aiass, by a long course of trials, was reduced to the extreme of poverty and misery. His despair assumed a gloomier character as the period approached which was to add another claimant to his affection,—another human being to his care; when, to the relation of *husband*, he was to add that of *father*. Talent, probity, industry—all were in vain displayed and exerted in his inhospitable native clime.

In Tartary, as elsewhere, “a prophet hath no honour in his own country;” and deprived of hope,—every resource failing,—he exchanged the few household articles which remained to him, for such as might best assist and sustain a frugal traveller. Accompanied by his wife, he left for ever the land of his birth; and, with courage to meet, and fortitude to endure, the perils and trials of his journey, he commenced the long march which was to remove him to the more fertile and more adventurous clime of India.

Cheerfully the pair proceeded on the earlier part of the journey, but before they had completed half the distance before them, the dreadful conviction smote them, that their stock of provisions, frugally as they had drawn on it, was nearly exhausted, and that famine was likely to overtake them in the inhospitable tract through which they were now passing.

Could any thing add to the bitterness of man’s feelings, in such a situation,—with such a prospect before him? There was yet a single drop to fall into the cup of Chaja Aiass;—

the moment was at hand which was to make him a father. Overcome with pain and fatigue, his wife had sunk at the foot of a tree, whose friendly branches sheltered her from the sun, and, in agony and suffering, from the contemplation of which Nature shrinks, and the possibility of the endurance of which philosophy might deny, she became the mother of a living daughter.

The first smile of that child beguiled the mother of the memory of her sufferings. Her attachment increased with her strength;—fatigue, privation, want, were remembered no more; “carrying her babe,” she said, “she could march so easily!”

The brow of the unhappy Chaja Aiass darkened into unwonted sternness. Their provisions had reached the lowest ebb; their utmost expedition would not bring them to human habitations before they were completely exhausted. His wife, weak, and still sick, was ill able to bear the additional fatigue of that burden which her maternal fondness tried to delude itself by pronouncing light. There was

no hope that she could afford her baby the sustenance it required; weariness, want, and weakness, would speedily deprive her of the provision Nature supplies. What was to be done? It was no novel idea to an Asiatic to leave the child exposed beneath the tree under which it was born. But the mother! Chaja Aiass felt his purpose shaken, as he pictured the distress to which it would expose his fellow-sufferer,—his *more* than fellow-sufferer.

The sun was above the mountains, when the husband, who had wrought himself to that pitch of resolution which enables the victim to endure the rack with silent lips, made preparations for their march. His wife, with the child girdled to her side, arose. "You are too weak," said Chaja Aiass; "give me our babe."

She looked in his face, and its darkness fell upon her spirit like an eclipse; a fear—a horror—a full conviction of his intent, pressed on her. Her despair seemed apathy, as, unresisting and passive, she obeyed his commands. The unconscious child lay smiling in his arms.

"It must be!" said he, and, as if fearful his resolution should waver, he deposited it at the foot of the tree which had been its birth-place.

"*Do not kill it!*" whispered the mother hoarsely, half unconscious of that which was passing before her. Chaja Aiass looked in her face; it seemed as if death had struck it.

Scarcely less cold was his own heart; yet, with the fortitude that marked his whole life, he did not swerve from an act which he believed necessary, and which, unhappily, in the moral code of his nation, is hardly a crime. He supported his trembling wife, and led her onwards.

She yielded to the impulse of his arm, but as she receded her head was turned back, and her eyes were constantly fixed on the forsaken one. Chaja Aiass spoke not;—consolation would have been mockery from *his* lips, as to *her* heart. At length the winding of the path shut out the child and the tree which shadowed it;—then, as if first comprehending the whole reality of her desolation, the bereaved mother poured forth the passion of her feelings.

Tearing herself from the supporting arm of her husband, she fell at his feet. She dashed her head on the earth in the wild madness of her agony. She supplicated,—she menaced,—she adjured him by his god,—and with dreadful imprecations on herself if she failed to fulfil her vow, she swore never to abandon her child,—to remain and perish with it.

The resolution of Chaja Aiass failed. His own anguish was awakened into a voice and an expression, by the passionate grief of his wife. “Be tranquil,” he said;—“if the child dies, we will die. I will return and bring it.”

In an instant her shrieks were hushed. The soft hope of a mother’s love flowed back on her heart, and brightened through her tears. She sat on the ground, her eyes fixed on the receding form of her husband, and, when he was no longer visible,—on that point of the landscape where he had disappeared; and in her tender longing for the certain presence of her child, she forgot that the storm of desolation had threatened her.

Chaja Aiass meanwhile came in sight of the

tree. His eye rested on its root, but the object there was strange and incomprehensible. It was *not* his child ;—it was a mass which in the distance seemed shapeless. With winged steps and a beating heart he approached.

Oh, horror !—The child *was* there, and looked up smilingly, even as it lay amidst the foul folds of a black and loathsome snake, that had writhed its whole length round the sweet body of the babe. A wild—loud shriek burst from the breast of Chaja Aiass. The reptile reared its head !—its folds were rapidly unwound, and in terror of the unseen enemy, it glided amidst the jungle of the forest.

Chaja Aiass remained as if rooted to the earth. In his eyes the flight of the snake, and the safety of his child, were miraculous,—the effects of the immediate and supernatural interference of his god. Tears fell from his eyes ;—he raised his child from its dangerous resting-place, and with a thousand caresses, pouring on its head blessings innumerable, he carried it to the impatient mother.

How the miracle was told by Chaja Aiass

in terms by no means less exalted than the occasion warranted, and how both wife and husband hailed it as a pledge of the future preservation and ultimate exaltation of the child, may be imagined by all those acquainted with the superstition of people, the half of whose actions are regulated by omens and auguries.

In confirmation of all these high-wrought expectations, before their supplies were entirely exhausted, just when fear was verging on appalling certainty, they came up with a party of travellers, who charitably admitted them into their company, and bestowed the aid that had at length become necessary.

Without farther difficulty they accomplished their journey to the capital of Akbar. Chaja Ajass was taken into the service of an Omrah about the court, into whose confidence, his talents, fidelity, and integrity, speedily advanced him. At length the monarch himself distinguished him, and through various degrees of promotion he attained the post of treasurer of the empire.

Meanwhile, the child so miraculously pre-

served had been educated by Chaja Aiass himself, with a care and attention immeasurably exceeding that bestowed on eastern women generally. Her expansion of intellect,—her improvement in the lighter accomplishments, rewarded the assiduity, and justified the doating fondness of her father. Her personal beauty as far exceeded that of the generality of women, as her intellectual accomplishments; and, the favour extended by Akbar to Chaja Aiass rendering his alliance as desirable as the graces of his daughter rendered it attractive, she was betrothed at an early age to an Omrah of rank and distinction at court.

The Sultan Selim, the son of Akbar, not less than his father favoured Chaja Aiass. Weak in intellect, indolent, and effeminate, he reposed on the superior mind of the treasurer, with a confidence that spared him all the fatigue of reflection. Occasionally he saw the young Nourmahal, and enraptured with her beauty—perhaps also allured by that evident strength of mind which offered aid to his own inertness,—he demanded her in marriage, and

pledged himself for the gratified concurrence of the Emperor.

But Nourmahal was betrothed. Chaja Aiass explained his dilemma to the prince; but Selim, sanguine in the success of his passion, engaged that the interference of Akbar would secure the consent of the Omrah himself to the breach of the engagement; and, won by his importunity, influenced also by his ambition to see the daughter fulfil, by becoming the wife of the future sovereign, the high destiny to which he believed her early and almost miraculous preservation had dedicated her, Chaja Aiass consented that Sultan Selim should implore the interference of his royal father.

But Akbar was too just to permit the passions of his son to change the laws of his empire, or to interfere with the customs of his people. The wise monarch knew too well his own influence, to be unaware that his interference would be compulsive on his Omrah, and that the mere hint of his wishes being construed into commands, would lead the betrothed bridegroom to yield in submission that

to which, if free, he would have maintained his indefeasible right with life. The princely lover bore his disappointment with a burning heart; but Chaja Aiass applauded the equity of his master's decision, and the marriage of Nourmahal was shortly afterwards completed.

Akbar died, and Selim ascended the throne of Delhi.

Selim—or Jehangire, for, on his elevation to the sovereignty, he assumed that magnificent title, signifying “Emperor of the World”—had not forgotten the charms of Nourmahal. The sudden crush of his hopes in the moment of fancied attainment, had rendered his passion the more violent, and his resolution eventually to attain his object became the more decided from the silence he was compelled to observe regarding it.

But now, to a monarch all things were easy, and if the ardour of his love was perhaps dissipated in the voluptuousness of the Zenanah, his desire of regaining that of which he deemed himself wrongfully deprived, and of punishing the Omrah who had been the innocent cause

of his disappointment, was the more intense. The husband of Nourmahal was sent, by the express command of the Emperor, on a mission so hopeless, that he felt he had received his death-warrant. The treacherous purpose of Jehangire was answered. He deprived himself of a faithful servant, and was avenged on a too fortunate rival.

Nourmahal received the tidings of her husband's death with a beating heart. Perhaps at this moment her ambition was first awakened ; she saw in no distant perspective, her union with Jehangire, and her consequent ascendancy in the state. Her heart probably was startled at the earliest approach of such imaginings ;—shocked thus to shake off the memory of—the *murdered*. Yes; Nourmahal was not for a moment blind to the fact, that the desperate mission on which her husband had been sent, was a snare for his life,—and that the disappointed passion of Selim had fired the train for his destruction.

Chaja Aiass was high in the favour of his monarch. The Emperor relied on the strength

of his understanding and the multiplicity of his resources, with all that unquestioning faith which had rendered him the confidant and friend of Sultan Selim. Still holding the post of Treasurer of the Empire, he was, in fact, 'in all measures of difficulty, the secret counsellor of the Emperor, and incomparably the most trusted. To him Jehangire first spoke of his wish, that Nourmahal should reside in the palace; and Chaja Aiass, whose respect for the memory of the Omrah was probably lost in the prospects of aggrandizement to himself and his family, which the anticipated influence of Nourmahal promised,—received "the intimation of his master's wishes, as a law which it became not his servant to dispute."

With a bounding heart Nourmahal entered the apartment of the Zenanah which was appropriated to her. Visions of the enjoyment of unbounded power,—the thought that henceforth the fate of a great empire would principally be regulated by her,—afforded so much mental occupation for the first few days after her arrival, that she scarcely regretted the absence of

the Emperor. But when weeks passed away, and he made no effort to see her ;—when she heard of him only as having refused to make that provision for her support which befitted the rank of his Sultana,—she was for an instant overwhelmed with consternation and dismay. But her mind was too haughty to lose for any long time the power of grappling with its destiny, and too active to be subdued to torpor. She aroused herself, and commenced the assiduous cultivation of those talents in which she was pre-eminent.

Her exquisite skill in embroidery,—her perfect knowledge of painting,—were put in requisition to manufacture articles of luxury and elegance, the sale of which might afford her the means of decorating her apartment and her person, with all the splendour that befitted her rank. Nor did her efforts relax during the years in which Jehangire persisted in his extraordinary resolution. Every day witnessed the creations of her needle and her pencil, vying with each other only in brilliancy and beauty,—

at once the ornament and the admiration of the whole court.

It was perhaps quite consistent with the weakness of Selim's character, that the complete attainment of his object,—the removal of the Omrah, and the possession of Nourmahal,—should diminish or annihilate his desire for it. All obstacles having disappeared, the prize he had so ardently coveted, probably lost in his eyes the powerful attractions it had once possessed. Former favourites too would zealously aim at occupying him with their allurements, lest a powerful rival should be elevated on their ruin. And his indolent spirit, content to know that she was within his reach, was probably beguiled without difficulty into declining an interview with her until eventually she had almost passed away from his thoughts.

But now every tongue found a theme of praise in the accomplishments of Nourmahal. Chaja Aiass, disappointed as he had been in the destiny of his daughter, was still favoured by the Emperor, and heard on all sides enco-

miums on the productions of her skill and industry. Not long could Jehangire be ignorant of that which incessantly occupied the imagination, and furnished the conversation of those by whom he was constantly surrounded. His vanity was gratified by being the possessor of her in whose favour all seemed agreed, and that vanity stimulated his curiosity. Before the close of that day he had visited the apartments of Nourmahal. Enraptured by the glow of her beauty,—proud in the conviction that the whole world commended her accomplishments,—his passion was rekindled in more than its original vehemence, and from that hour the supreme dominion of the favourite Sultana was established.

Chaja Aiass felt, at length, that the brilliant destiny which the miraculous escape of the babe had predicted, had been realised, in the elevation of the woman,—rejoiced, and was satisfied. By the influence of his daughter he was elevated to the Vizarit, whilst his two sons were placed in the first rank of Omrahs.

Their elevation, though originating in an

unworthy sourcee, might have reflected honour on the wisdom of the most sagacious monarch. The administration of Chaja Aiass was distinguished for justice, talent, and success;—the reins of the empire were in his hands, for Jehangire, intoxicated with his passion for his wife, resigned himself wholly to the influence of her charms. Nevertheless, the voice of the people spoke content and gladness, for the minister was their judge and protector. Neither were men envious of the elevation of his sons; their moderation disarmed envy, and their prudence secured esteem.

During the seven years that Chaja Aiass held the Vizarit, the influence of Nourmahal, unbounded as it was over the mind of Jehangire, was disarmed of any pernicious effects. But, at length, the upright minister closed his extraordinary life, leaving behind him a name long holden in veneration by a people grateful for the blessings that had marked his ministry. The grief of the Sultana was unbounded. The best affections of her heart were devoted to her father. Admiration of *his* talents,—gratitude

for his assiduous cultivation of her own,—respect for his integrity,—had effectually restrained the exercise of the unlimited power she possessed over the Emperor. Her character also was softened by its sympathy in the charities of human affinity ;—she was redeemed in some degree from the cold heartlessness resulting from the possession of supreme dominion,—but with his death the restraint was removed. Although gratified that her brother, Asiph Jah, was, by her desire, nominated as the successor to the office and dignities of his father,—aware, likewise, that his talents were worthy of the son of Chaja Aiass, she had not that habitual reverence for him,—that instinctive respect which makes us veil our very selves in the presence of superior intellect united with unimpeachable integrity, in our desire of preserving the approbation we feel necessary to our happiness,—which had encompassed her spirit in the lifetime of her father. She gave the reins to her ambition, and allowed free indulgence to every caprice her passions or her haughtiness dictated. The new minis-

ter saw, and trembled for, the mischief to the state that might result from the tyranny of so indomitable a temper. He ventured a remonstrance, which was received with disgust, and with an imperious mandate to perform the duties of the Vizarit, and to withhold the least interference with the wishes of the Sultana. Asiph Jah submitted in silence to an evil for which the imbecility of Jehangire promised no remedy, and set himself to perform zealously the duties of his exalted position, and counteract as much as in him lay the evils which could not effectually be prevented.

Of the sons of Jehangire, Shah Jehan was he who possessed those bold and energetic qualities necessary to the character of a prince. Domestic dissensions had embittered the life of the Emperor, who, beyond all things, coveted the enjoyment of indolence. Chusero, his first-born, had headed a rebellion against the royal authority, and was now confined in a fortress in Malwa. Purvez, his second son, governed Candeish, residing at the capital with all the splendour of a sovereign. Of an easy temper,

inherited from Jehangire, he had little skill in the conduct of an army, or curbing the fiery spirit of its officers. In a conflict with Ameer Sing, the Raja of Odipore, he had, by his want of ability to remedy the difficulties that encompassed him, been compelled to retreat to Ajmere with considerable loss. The Emperor himself hastened to that city, and sent Chirrum, his youngest and best-beloved son, into the mountains to prosecute the war. The event covered the youthful prince with glory, and gave him an ascendancy over Purvez, which subsequent events confirmed. Purvez, with the bad success which was always attendant on his warlike efforts, was again engaged against the princes of the Deccan, and Chirrum, new-named by his father Shah Jehan, "the King of the World," was sent, notwithstanding the representations of Asiph Jah of the danger of thus openly preferring his youngest-born, to supersede Purvez in the command of the forces. Purvez yielded what he was too indolent to contest; and Shah Jehan, with that prudence which, equally with his valour, cha-

racterized him, secured the glory of terminating the war, by listening to the terms of accommodation offered by the enemy, and removing every difficulty that threatened the amicable termination of the contest.

An interval of thirteen years strengthened the mind, and confirmed the ambition of Shah Jehan. After the lapse of that period, the princes of the Deccan, lulled into security by a long peace, violated the engagements on which that peace was founded. To reduce them to submission, Shah Jehan was despatched with an immense force. The allies had already taken arms and had crossed the Nerbudda, but, on his approach, terrified by his numbers, and intimidated by the remembrance of his former victories, they made peace, and retreated. This event confirmed the ambitious designs of Shah Jehan. Chusero, his eldest brother, so long a prisoner, had been released at the request of Shah Jehan, and permitted to accompany him on his expedition. This prince was secretly assassinated, and suspicion loudly accused Shah Jehan of instigating the deed. Jehangire

adopted the general opinion, and commanded his son to his presence. Shah Jehan received this as the signal of revolt. Relying on the devotedness of his troops, he openly threw off his allegiance, assumed the royal titles, and advanced to attack the Emperor. His rebellion ended in complete defeat. Deserted by his followers,—forsaken by his friends,—he who had been so elate of heart in prosperity, sank beneath the reverse, and a letter to Jehangire was the herald of his contrition and entire submission. The Emperor, with the clemency natural to his character, pardoned him, but commanded him to repair instantly with his family to Agra,—a mandate which he contrived to elude, and to travel, as if in quest of amusement, through various parts of the empire.

Mohâbet, the successful general, who had preserved the throne, and probably the life of his master, was regarded by the haughty Nourmahal with feelings of hatred that were embittered by every accession to his fame. He was one of the few who did not owe his elevation to

her influence; and not to be the creature, was to be enrolled amongst the enemies of the Sultana. She sought by every artifice to awaken in the breast of Jehangire, that jealousy of superior merit, the common vice of mean minds. She represented the danger to his sovereignty which might result from the high reputation of his victorious general. She acted the part of the dark spirit with the Jewish monarch. " Cannot he who preserved, also deprive ?" she asked. " Will not he who has the power of placing the crown where he pleases, find it best befitting himself ? Shall the slave hold in his hands the destiny of the monarch ?" Jehangire listened, trembled, and believed. Successive orders to resign various commands, were followed by a mandate to present himself before the Emperor. Aware of the weakness of his master's mind,—of the supreme influence of Nourmahal, and her hatred of himself,—Mohâbet represented the inconvenience to which obedience would subject him, and requested permission to remain. " Is the Emperor now satisfied of the

treason of the slave?"—asked Nourmahal, and an imperious order for his immediate appearance was issued.

Mohâbet wavered no longer. Five thousand Rajpoots, who had served under his banner, volunteered their attendance, and with this escort he hastened to the imperial camp. But ere he had actually approached, he was commanded to halt, until he had accounted for the expenditure of the Bengal revenue, and for the plunder acquired by his army in the late action. Mohâbet, humbled in the dust by this indignity, sent his son-in-law to the camp of the Emperor to exonerate him from the imputations with which he was assailed. Instead of listening to his defence, Jehangire, whose anger became fierce in proportion to the injuries he was committing, received the messenger with every mark of indignation. He was treated with all the indignities that can be inflicted by oriental despotism. Having been despoiled of his garments, covered with rags, and suffered the punishment of the bastinado, he was driven from the camp, placed backwards on a wretched

tattoo, and exposed to the insults and scoffs of the populace, always ready to swell the current of royal vengeance. The indignation of Mohâbet was roused by the account of the contumely to which his son-in-law had been compelled to submit, and he prepared to avenge it, and wipe away the stain that had fallen on the honour of his family.

Mohâbet withdrew his faithful band from the immediate neighbourhood of the camp of the Emperor ;—sheltered by an eminence near the river Jielum, he remained a few days in quiet watchfulness of the motions of the royal army. At length he saw symptoms of immediate movement, and the foremost bands passed the river, whilst all were on the march, save the royal household. The rear of the troops had crossed the river, and the tents of the Emperor and his retinue remained still pitched. Mohâbet, with part of his Rajpoost, sallied forth ; they rushed to the bridge, and destroyed it, thus cutting off the royal army from the power of returning. Proceeding to the tent of Jehangire, he secured the person of the sove-

reign, and whilst he effected this first object, Nourmahal escaped.

Asiph Jah, the faithful servant of a weak master, on the following day put himself at the head of the army, and endeavoured to ford the river. Mohâbet received him on the opposite bank, and repulsed him with great loss. On this complete defeat the army dispersed, and Asiph Jah took refuge in a fortress on the Allock, which, however, he was speedily obliged to surrender. Mohâbet, too virtuous to heap indignities on the head of the unfortunate Jehangire, seemed to forget the injustice done to himself, and paid his master every honour consistent with his safe keeping. The Emperor, no longer exposed to the influence of Nourmahal, confessed that he had too harshly treated his faithful and victorious servant, and Mohâbet contemplated a near period when, without endangering his own safety, he might restore his sovereign to perfect liberty. Nourmahal, however, who had taken refuge at Labore, set out to rejoin the Emperor. Receiving tidings of her design, Mohâbet sent

forward a party of his followers, as if to constitute an escort, by which means he had a constant guard upon her actions. Aware that her restoration to Jehangire would be followed by her absolute ascendancy, and by measures which would probably lead to struggles that could terminate only either in the ruin of himself, or in the deposal of the monarch, he hastened to the presence of Jehangire, and accused Nourmahal of serious crimes. The attachment of the Emperor required to be sustained by the constant presence of its object, and a few months' separation had considerably weakened his affection for the Sultana. In her absence he had learned that he could live very tranquilly without her, and that she was by no means necessary to his existence, or even to his enjoyments. He yielded to the remonstrances of Mohâbet, and signed the order for her execution. Mohâbet carried it to her. She received it with stern composure. Her mind seemed always to gather strength in great emergencies. She said, "My enemies triumph, and the stars have decided that I must die.

Nevertheless, I have been faithful to the Emperor, and for the years in which we have lived together, I desire to see him once more. Then deal with me as you will."

Mohâbet, respecting the courage that characterised her, granted her request. He had no fear of any evil result. Jehangire had become indifferent to his former idol, and, moreover, was naturally desirous of making a sacrifice which cost him little, to the wishes of the man who held him prisoner. Nourmahal prepared herself for her visit. Attired with decorum, but divested of all her ornaments, with cheeks bedewed with tears, and with downcast eyes, she stood in the presence of the Emperor. No word passed her lips, and as she slowly raised her eyes, she fixed them on Jehangire with a glance of tender reproach, which, at the same time, expressed rather a melancholy resolution, than an appeal to his compassion. Her presence had awakened in the heart of the vacillating prince all those emotions which had rendered her former empire unbounded. She seemed to him more desirable than ever, as she

appeared on the verge of final departure. Her eyes penetrated his heart with a thousand sentiments of love and compassion. Deprived of all mastery of himself, he burst into a passion of tears, and clasped her in his arms.

"Mohâbet," he said, "Mohâbet, have you the heart to slay this woman, and to break your master's! See her tears—behold mine! Shall she—shall I—weep in vain?"—There was a pause.

"The Emperor of the Moguls must not ask and be denied," said Mohâbet, and from that moment Nourmahal resumed her royal state.

Mohâbet did not long detain the Emperor in confinement. In a few months he restored to him entire liberty, and generously confiding in the gratitude and the promises of his master, he dismissed the greater part of his own faithful adherents. But he miscalculated the strength of Nourmahal's passions, and her strong tenacity of purpose. To her former hatred of Mohâbet was superadded a desire of vengeance for the peril in which, by his means, she had been placed, and for the insult that

had been offered to her person in being brought to the camp of the general as a prisoner. All her influence, all her arts, were employed to induce the Emperor to order the execution of his former generous enemy, and now faithful subject; but in this solitary instance the virtue of Jehangire proved itself capable of resistance. Aware that his refusal had only led the Sultana to adopt the expedient of assassination, he had the justice to warn Mohabet of his danger.—The unfortunate warrior, satisfied that immediate flight offered the only means of safety, hastened from the camp, unattended by either a friend or domestic. Proclamations, at the instigation of Nourmahal, whose thirst for vengeance became the more intense when she found its object had escaped, were issued to governors of provinces, and to all persons holding official jurisdiction within the dominions of the Emperor, not to harbour or assist the fugitive, on peril of treason. Thus proscribed, Mohabet resolved on a measure which indicated as much magnanimity in himself, as he ascribed to the person to whom he meant to

intrust himself. He hastened to the tent of Asiph Jah, disguised, and under shelter of a moonless night;—planting himself in the passage that led from the tent of the minister to the apartments of the females, he remained until he was discovered by the officer of the guard. This man, on ascertaining who addressed him, conducted him, as he requested, to the Visier. Asiph Jah, long wearied and disquieted at the constant interruption his wisest and most beneficial designs received from the baneful exercise of his sister's influence with the Emperor, received Mohâbet with assurances of protection, and concealed him in a place of security. A close alliance was formed between them, and the resolution that Jehangire was incompetent to conduct the affairs of his kingdom, was acquiesced in by both. Purvez resembled his father too closely to promise to become a vigorous or an useful sovereign; and the confederates determining that Shah Jehan must succeed to the throne of Delhi, separated, and Mohâbet proceeded to the court of the Rajah of Odeypore, there to

await a favourable juncture for the execution of their plan.

Natural events forestalled their designs. Jehangire died by a stroke of apoplexy; and after a short contest with Shariar, the son of Jehangire, who had married the daughter of Nourmahal by her first nuptials, Shah Jehan was placed on the Imperial throne. History is silent regarding the future fate of Nourmahal. She sank into the obscurity which the perpetual imprisonment of the widowed females of eastern princes naturally casts over their latter days; or she perished in that slaughter by which Shah Jehan cut off the whole male population of the house of Timur, save his own sons, thus establishing himself in unquestioned right and authority on the throne of the Moguls.

She has served, however, if not "to point a moral," "to adorn a tale," for poetry has cast a halo round her name, and made her so dear to the imagination, that we regret the severity of history which leaves such a portrait of "**THE LIGHT OF THE HARAM.**"

DOCTOR PAUL.

THAT small bungalow at the northern extremity of the lines of the —— regiment, is an object of attention to all new-comers. Its situation is happily chosen. The compound slopes downwards to the river's bank on one side, and a small grove of evergreens and flowering shrubs shades it from the road on the other. Westward, there is a well-cultivated and orderly garden. The milk-hedges are cut scrupulously, and trained with great attention to appearance, and with considerable success. The drive up to the house, and the broad pathway round its verandahs, are smooth and cleanly, like a gravel-walk in an English garden. The fragrant mendy bounds one side of

the avenue, and loads every gale with its hawthorn-like perfume. Yes, hawthorn-like,—at least, it pleases one to fancy the resemblance, which may pass very well *here*. If it crowned a violet-bank at home, indeed,—but why depreciate the shrub by the comparison? We may be grateful for its actual sweetness, and for the thoughts it brings of spring-tide evenings, and pleasant, paradise-like fields and shrubberies,—far, far away. There is no vegetation immediately surrounding the house: there is a plain, at least ten yards square, entirely bare. But this is healthy; it taints the atmosphere with no malaria; it threatens no fever, and it harbours no mosquitoes. The house itself is oval, thatched, low-roofed, and with grey walls. A verandah entirely surrounds it, supported by chunammed pillars of the most cleanly white. It is raised at least five feet above the level of the country; in that and in everything built to the greatest possible advantage, and to afford the greatest possible share of accommodation and comfort.

It belongs to Doctor Paul, who knows every-

body, and whom everybody knows and everybody likes.

Doctor Paul cannot be under forty, or, at most, a year or two. His is just that complexion on which one is quite sure that the climate has produced no effect; he is not one of those whom these suns have parched and shrivelled into a look of premature age. His face is suffused with one tint of—what shall I call it?—It is neither pink nor red, it approaches more nearly to the former; but is quite free from all those associations of too great conviviality which one is so apt to attach to complexions resembling it. His features are sharp and hooked, his forehead retreating so exceedingly as to give to the form of his head the appearance of a caricature. His figure and limbs are long, lanky, and loose; somebody called him the original of Dominie Sampson. His eyes are grey and keen, with just sufficient obliquity to give a cast of the comic to his physiognomy. In discussion, his manner becomes vehement and loud beyond all rule, and his gesticulation proportionably

violent. He has none of that “patience of attention” which characterised Napoleon. He is restless as soon as his opponent begins to advance his proofs, and, unable to bear the irritation of contradiction, he interrupts with an abruptness and violence unpardonable in any person who has not the apology of originality, and the privilege of *being* privileged. But then Doctor Paul is really the most excellent person! so ready to do a good office! His errors are attributed to the contracted sphere in which his early life was passed, to the deficient education that was bestowed on him. His accent is always Scotch,—when he is warm, it becomes broadly so; and then he has an assortment of French and Latin phrases, which, though always properly applied, are so disguised in the pronunciation, as surely to be beyond the recognition of those to whom they are, or were, the mother tongue. Occasionally, too, he indulges in Johnsonian phrase, still guiltless of Mrs. Malaprop’s sin, but masking the words in such sounds as might have added to the confusion of Babel, and which certainly have the effect of

giving one trait of the sublime to his sentences,—they are obscure. All his knowledge has been *thought out* by himself, and he probably values his acquirements the more, that they are so thoroughly his own property. Nature has bestowed on him her higher gifts with a niggard hand; but she has in some sort compensated for her neglect, by endowing him with a perseverance that knows no fatigue, and dreads and is deterred by no obstacle. His acquaintance with Indian society has not tended to enlarge his views; and perhaps, take him for all in all, there never was a mind of equal strength, so overstocked with prejudices of all kinds, shades, and descriptions.

From his age, his length of service, and the unusual circumstance of his always having been attached to one corps, the young men look up to him as the father of the regiment, and fly to him for advice and assistance in all their difficulties. He is liberal of both, and the distressed invariably leave his door with a lightened step and a more cheerful heart. He invents excuses for them to their creditors, and if these

will not pass current, as too frequent utterance effaces the impression of the purest coin, he drives away the dun by too much—"paish, paish!"* as they term it, and keeps triumphant possession of the field until the next month. He is also the general scribe,—the dictator of official applications for leave, and apologies for neglects, and explanations of errors, in short, personal staff to every individual officer, who consequently deems Father Paul, as they call him, the best friend he has on earth, and pretty nearly the cleverest fellow in the world.

Although the very appearance of Doctor Paul is an antidote to sentiment, yet there is a little romance in his history; indeed, what human being lives, who cannot cull from the common-places of his existence some short period, that seems to him in after-days as a passage through fairy-land? There were hints and surmises, gathered from his own occasional allusions, and from the recollections of his earlier friends, of an attachment, imbibed in his very boyhood, when, a peasant-boy amongst

* Chatter.

peasants, he sunned himself with his father's sheep on the hill-side, or by the banks of a burn, shaded by a mass of leafy trees.

It seems that Doctor Paul had been a sickly child, and so weak as to be unfitted for laborious employments, which awakened the charity of the village Galen, who bestowed on him all his own skill; and then his mother was a far-off cousin of the laird's,—so that by degrees Doctor Paul was put in the way of higher attainments, and in process of time came to India assistant-surgeon, to pluck the gold mohurs, and return to Scotland a Nabob. But this is anticipation. The attachment of his boyhood began and flourished under circumstances quite *à la mode de Jeanie Deans* and Reuben Butler, and the fair indulged dreams that lasted some years. But the persuasions of some rural Dumbiedikes were more effectual with Doctor Paul's fair one than with her prototype. It was the old history of woman's fickleness,—and the wise pronounce it the origin of all the harmless peculiarities which distinguish the forsaken. Whenever he speaks of woman, it is to deprecate her; he

affects to look down on her intellect, and to consider her, *en morale*, by no means *too* perfect. But then he so contradicts all this bitterness of speech by his actions ! In the whole cantonment there is not a man more attentive to the other sex,—more careful of their comfort —and in their indispositions the kindest of medical attendants. So that, despite his misanthropic tinge, he is always considered a *lady's man*, and employed in the thousand little offices appropriated to the character.

He is a great admirer of Blackwood, and an enthusiast in his eulogies of the “*Noctes*.” It is suspected that he makes a study of the shepherd’s part in those colloquies, for he quotes sentence upon sentence *ad infinitum*. In his secret hearth he has pronounced a ban on the Edinburgh, into the pages of which he never glances ; but he has so much *nationality*, that if an unfortunate Englishman disparages *The Review* ever so slightly, Doctor Paul’s Scottish feelings are immediately up in arms against the offender, at whom he vociferates with a vehemence and perseverance that would be almost in excess,

if employed in the defence of his dearest friend. His eyes kindle, and his complexion deepens to crimson, whilst his accent becomes almost too broad to be comprehended by the ears of the southron, if he were not assisted by the recollection, that no Scotchman can allow an Englishman to speak slightly of *the country*, and, notwithstanding a difference of political faith, the aforesaid Edinburgh is considered by all parties as a national property, with which profane hands are not to intermeddle.

Dr. Paul is a great diner-out. He has always more invitations than any other person, and *never* declines except on the ground of a *bona fide* pre-engagement. He is a favourite guest at the mess, where he talks at pleasure, generally having the field to himself, and conscious that the warm applause of his audience follows him. He sings too,—every thing that Burns ever wrote, capable of being harmonized, and much that he never *did* write. All his songs have a touch of the sentimental in them;—sea songs, of the school of Dibdin and

Incedon, being his abomination. His ear is correct, but his taste,—however, being of no school, it is *original*, and his harmonious ornaments please not the less because they are more amusing than elegant. Altogether the play of his features,—his gestures,—give such universal delight, which it boots not to analyze too closely, and Doctor Paul is so frequently solicited to do honour to the wine, that he retires in a condition of great comfort and exaltation, always terminating his visit with a speech of desultories, connected by a link of eulogy on himself, which is the exuberance of his own harmless vanity, and draws forth thunders of applause from his gratified audience.

On the whole, Doctor Paul is quite a character,—to be placed in the composite order, the component parts being, little education, Scotch feelings, strong mind, and Indian society. He belongs to a species never found in Europe, because he is the produce of circumstances that have no existence there. This imperfect sketch falls far short of his claims to attention;—to be

justly appreciated, he must be intimately known. However, though unfinished, the likeness is accurate, and will be recognised by all who belong to that numerous and respectable body, the friends and admirers of DOCTOR PAUL.

THE BALL.

WHAT an excitement agitates the whole population of an up-country station at the announcement of a Ball!—what a succession of hopes and fears amongst the subalterns expectant of invitations! In India the position of the sexes, as far as regards public entertainments, is exactly reversed; ladies are as much *recherchées* here as *beaux* in England. Quadrilles must be danced, and there *must* be an adequate proportion of females to dance them; therefore she who is issuing her cards, whatever may be her own pretensions, or her fastidiousness on ordinary occasions, is under the necessity of waiving all her objections to *le plus mauvais ton*; hideousness; *fourteen stones*;

execrable English, or French precisely as good ; and a host of atrocities, which render the possessors inadmissible at morning-calls, ineligible at dinners, but—*saute de choix*,—essential at balls. The list of names masculine is conned, however, with very considerable scrutiny ; when abundance offers itself to the selection, people can afford to be critical. The unfortunates are quite aware of the existing state of things, and know themselves between the horns of dilemma,—either to endure whims and caprices of no common extent, or to take refuge in the pride of disdaining the society of womankind of all descriptions, at dinner, ball, or supper, morning-call, or evening-drive. This class, however, is not numerous, and the great majority of the cantonment were relieved on the present occasion from considerable anxiety, by learning, after the issuing of a few cards, that Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke meant to make quite a general thing of it. Every heart, therefore, was at liberty to dwell on the anticipated delights of the evening, according to its own peculiar mode of enjoyment.

"Yes, on due reflection," said Lieutenant-Colonel Parke, looking wise almost in proportion to his weight, "it will be advisable to ask everybody. *I may* be removed, you know, Anne, nobody can say how soon; and who can tell what corps I shall get next? And at my time of life, Mrs. Parke, it is better to be on amicable terms with my officers: you understand, Mrs. Parke?—A word to the wise,—humph!"

"It is a pity you did not come to that conclusion sooner," said Mrs. Parke, amiably, "for every officer of ours has sent a refusal, except Grampus, who goes anywhere for a feed gratis."

"I don't care,—so much the better," returned Lieutenant-Colonel Parke sulkily; "my young men want a few court-martials amongst them, and I'll see if I can't have two or three of them in arrest before long. I'll have them out to squad drill, and see how they'll like it,—humph!"

Mrs. Parke turned away, half in a pet with her "model for all Colonels, past, present, and

to come," as his mutineers called him, and half angry at the defiance implied by the *declining* of all the officers of their own regiment except Mr. Grampus, who indeed, as Mrs. Parke had elegantly expressed it, went *anywhere* for a feed gratis.

She looked over her notes with all the haste the difficulty she found in decyphering any person's autograph that was less than the magnitude of round hand, permitted. Mrs. Parke had great disadvantages to contend with: some said "old Parke had picked her up at a charity-school at Calcutta;"—some hinted that her childhood had been spent under auspices much less unexceptionable; there were many and divers reports afloat, but one point of accordance existed amongst all,—Mrs. Parke was originally *nobody*,—had bad manners,—most unforgivable awkwardness of address,—unusually plain person; and if this had not been a period of particular dulness in the cantonment of —, all the world then agreed, that her *acceptances* would have been confined to the *canaille*.

As it was, however, Mrs. Parke had no cause to be dissatisfied with the reception of her invitations. Acceptance followed on acceptance, and notwithstanding a few indignant risings of temper at "the insolent *refusals* of "*our own*" officers, she addressed herself, in very pleasant mood, to effect the necessary preparations.

Two large field-officers' tents were pitched in the compound as supper-rooms. The hall was "to be dedicated to the votaries of Terpsichore," as the newspapers express it. The cook had special instructions; the butler was lectured into the most unconditional stupidity; and Mrs. Parke prepared, and her tailor executed, all the furbelows and fripperies she had gathered to be fashionable from the "*Magazines des Modes*" which lay on her table, the latest number of which was only twelve months old.

The evening came;—the moon was as bright as Indian moons at the full generally are. The hall was nearly cleared, the tents were nearly

furnished. Mrs. Parke was dressed, very much to her own satisfaction, in a waist to her hips, and a petticoat fulled and stiffened into the dignified rotundity of a hoop, and flounced over two-thirds of its longitude. A vast pyramid of roses aided considerably the imposing effect of her appearance, and she looked "to the full as well," Cornet Witherby said, "*as could be expected.*"

The guests were all collected, and the band having preluded a few flourishes, remarkable chiefly for their originality,—no slight merit in these degenerate days,—a double set of quadrilles were formed, and active operations forthwith commenced.

The *ears of Midas* seemed quite the fashion;—there was such scrambling, and pushing, and shoving, and directing,—now in French, now in English *patois*—“*Chassez à la droite*”—“*Ballotez*”—“*Balancez*”—“*Turn your partner*”—“*Right and left*”—“*Glissez*”—“*Dos à dos, my dear Mrs. Jones*—back to back”—“*All out!*”—“*How provoking!*”—

"Begin again"—“We can't manage ‘the Lancers!’”—Push—scramble—shout—shove—&c. &c. &c.

However, there was plenty of mirth,—jokes,—laughing not quite within the limits prescribed by Chesterfield,—and perhaps, except in a few instances, , the blundering of the dancers promoted ~~an~~ hilarity that was much better suited to the tone of the society than grace or decorum. Everybody told Mrs. Parke that it was exceedingly delightful;—and just before supper there was a country-dance, which afforded Lieutenant-Colonel Parke the means of displaying his agility,—and the young men shouted their applause of his Harlequinades, and called him “*a feathered Mercury;*”—and in the “very witching time of night,” supper was announced, and, the ladies being duly cared for, there was a rush as of a whirlwind by the remnant, in the direction of the tent.

The tables were covered—were groaning beneath the slaughtered hecatombs. It was a feast fit for Homer's heroes;—centuries have

been gathered to the “years before the Flood” since any thing resembling it has been afforded by the hospitality of “merry England.” Soup of kinds—*mulligatawny*, and vermicelli, and turtle;—huge turkeys and huger hams;—barons of beef;—saddles of mutton;—geese, and all manner of tame fowl;—legs of pickled pork, and pease-pudding,—these were the delicacies that tempted the appetites of Indian epicures. Two or three ultra-fashionists, just imported from cold and icy Europe, stared, and turned a little pale as they inhaled the steam arising from the various “savouries;”—swallowed a jelly, and a biscuit, and a glass of wine;—but the rest of the party addressed themselves valiantly to the work of devastation. They drank beer in huge tumblers,—men and women;—they ate of the beef, and the mutton, and the pork, and the turkeys, and the fowls, and they closed with real Mussulmauni curries. The punkahs were fanned manfully in all directions, nevertheless they waxed warm: each guest had one or two of his own servants in attendance, so that the

tents were crowded to suffocation, and, as somebody said afterwards, there was fixed air enough within the walls to prove that animals may exist therein. Indeed, the atmosphere was so purely artificial, that the removal of the viands exposed the organs of the sensitive to attacks somewhat more offensive.

There was a call for "a song from Colonel Parke," and the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Parke, in obedience thereunto, put on a countenance that rendered him fit to exhibit as the frontispiece to Colman's "Broad Grins," and addressed himself to the task incontinently.—He sang—no matter for the name—*such* a song!—And applause was vociferated, and the ladies laughed, and looked well-pleased, except the two or three lately imported; who, Mrs. Parke declared, gave themselves a great many airs. And then the females returned to the ball-room, just as the Colonel politely gave "the Ladies,"—and the gentlemen remained to make themselves better qualified for the campaigning that was to succeed.

In process of time, dancing re-commenced,

and the scrambling and laughing and vociferating were more emphatic than before. And they whirled in the Spanish dance, until some became giddy, and others stumbled, and others fell. Then there was a *second* supper,—of grills, and stews, and lukewarms, and cold, of which the majority of the ladies partook, and dancing was resumed,—reels and country-dances, until by the aid of frequent refreshings of negus, the greater part of the loftier sex were in a condition which admonished their *gentler* partners, not only of the propriety, but of the absolute necessity of a retreat.

When they were fairly deposited in their various vehicles,—tonjons, or palanquins,—a scene of uproarious revelry commenced, of which it is needless to depict the details.—Bursts of the coarsest laughter repaid jests as coarse,—toasts and tempests of applause,—songs and thundering knocks upon the table,—led the way to a third supper, before the termination of which, glasses, bottles, dishes, and viands were flying about in all directions. One by one the guests walked off, or were carried

away, accordingly as they lost or retained power over their muscles,—and so the glory of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke's ball, like all other mundane glories, passed away.

Not so the memory of it. The most mirthful of the guests were by no means the least backward in expressing their censure of the vulgarity and bad taste that had marked the whole proceeding. They ridiculed the supper,—the dancing,—the dresses of the ladies,—and Mrs. Parke herself above all others. Her person—her manner—her extravagance—her temper,—afforded in succession matter of condemnation. Some of Mrs. Parke's very good-natured friends, wounded that she should receive such a recompense for her hospitality, were careful to repeat as many of the censoring and censurable remarks, that were flying in all directions, as they could possibly gather. Poor Mrs. Parke sighed over her folly, and was loud and incessant in her lamentations to the Colonel that so many rupees had been wasted on such dreadful ingrates. The Colonel made a gesticulation explanatory of his anger,—

whether at Mrs. Parke, or the guests, or both, is a mystery that has never yet been solved ; and it was observed that the introduction of this subject, for many days afterwards, never elicited from him any other remark than that which his intimates understood to be conveyed by his pithy and emphatic " humph ! "

But all mortification and bitterness disappeared from the amiable bosoms of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke, and they basked in a halo of glory emanating from that fountain of intelligence—that most luminous of all journals,—the —— Gazette.

" Most sincerely do we congratulate our brethren in the East,"—the Editor speaks *in propriâ personâ*,—" on the spirit of hospitality diffused through every station, however remote, in which Europeans are congregated. Nothing can have a more beneficial tendency in ameliorating the condition of the exile, and in dissipating the tedium of a protracted residence in this ungenial clime, than a disposition to promote innocent mirth and elegant conviviality. For our own parts we must confess, that though

our dancing-days are over, we are not so 'fallen into the sere and yellow leaf' as to be incapable of enjoying the spectacle afforded by the hilarity which pervades a ball-room, the genuine design of which is seldom obtained so entirely in any part of the world as in India. We are the first to hail the gaieties that are announced, and to afford the warmest meed of our praise to those which have delighted and passed away—only, it is hoped, to be succeeded by others as effectual in binding the hearts of the European community in one link of amity. In accordance with our plan of paying tribute where tribute is due, we conceive we should fail greatly in our duty to our readers and ourselves, if we neglected to notice a splendid ball and supper given at —pore, by Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke, to whom the whole cantonment are indebted for various preceding acts of hospitality. We derive our information from a private letter.

"The guests were nearly all assembled at nine P.M., and shortly afterwards the band of the regiment which the gallant host commands,

played a lively air, that served as a signal to the votaries of Terpsichore to select their partners. The elegant quadrille, and the graceful waltz, by turns afforded the dancers opportunity of displaying their proficiency in this highly attractive accomplishment, until midnight, when supper was announced, and the numerous assemblage adjourned from the ball-room to two field officers' tents, of the largest size and most commodious form,—tastefully decorated,—round the sides of which the supper tables were laid out, covered with every choice delicacy that can be culled from the east and the west, and furnishing in their abundance farther proofs, if necessary, of the munificent hospitality so characteristic of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke. The richest wines flowed profusely round; wit sparkled as the nectareous beverage was imbibed; songs from many gentlemen of highly cultivated taste added to the spirit of the scene, and Lieutenant-Colonel Parke himself afforded his guests the high gratification of witnessing a display of those comic powers for which he is so eminent.

"The ladies retired at length from the supper-rooms, and were speedily followed by their gallant partners, who were too well aware of the exquisite delight conferred by female society, lightly to forego its charms when within their reach. Dancing recommenced, and the morning-gun had fired as the last remaining guest departed,—closing reluctantly a night of the most animated excitement, where mirth had been controlled only by elegance, and where the vivacity of youth had been indulged with that moderation which the known good taste and exquisite fashion of Mrs. Parke prescribed.

"Above twenty ladies graced the entertainment by their presence, and the beauty of their persons,—the air of high *ton* conspicuous in their address,—the perfect taste displayed in their costume, of the finest texture, most costly description, and most fashionable form, threw over the scene an enchantment which only their presence could diffuse. There was no *gaucherie* manifest to dissipate the illusion, and the rapt gazer might, without any great ex-

aggeration of fancy, imagine himself at Almack's.

"To Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs. Parke the whole Station are in the highest degree indebted, not only for the pleasure of the evening, great as it was in itself, but for such an opportunity of exhibiting the temper and tone of refinement which pervades the society. They have afforded an irrefragable contradiction to the absurd opinion prevalent in Europe, that the goodbreeding and elegance which control the best circles at home are unknown here, and that instead of them, our entertainments are conspicuous only for the extreme of dullness, or of boisterous mirth, equally hostile to the polished relaxation which a refined mind requires as its necessary aliment. This erroneous opinion is now very little entertained amongst the best-informed at home, so far as regards the Presidencies;—but we lament to say there is an existing prejudice relative to up-country, or Mofussil stations. A few more entertainments so well-conducted, will suffice to remove this most unfounded and indeed

illiberal prepossession; and most happy shall we be to afford the aid of our widely-circulated columns in effacing so unjust an impression. We therefore solicit frequent communications from our Mofussil readers, to enable us, by a plain and unvarnished statement of facts, to remove prejudices so injurious to the social character of our respected countrymen, whose duty fixes them for long periods in remote districts."

"*Humph!*"—said Lieutenant-Colonel Parke, and it was the first pleasurable '*humph!*'—he had uttered on the subject. If Goldsmith's Mr. Burchell had witnessed the producing cause, and read the encomium, he would have contributed possibly his equally emphatic—"fudge!"

TULZAH AND ADJEIT.

ONE of the most beautiful vales in Central India is situated on a branch of the Nerbud-dah, whose bright and blue stream intersects it from north to south. The village that lies on the right bank of the river, with its white huts glittering through the tope which shadows it, is as picturesque as any that adorns the Indian landscape. A building of imposing dimensions, on a commanding eminence just beyond the village, and a pagoda at the other extremity, contest the palm of superiority. The former is the country-house of the Zemindar of the district.

The whole region teems with fertility. Immediately under the eye of the master whose

prosperity depends on its cultivation, it is little likely that a negligent or ignorant ryot should be permitted to continue a tenant of the soil. Coudiah had been an indulgent and consequently a wise landlord ; he knew well that the cultivator, ground down by rigorous exactions, has neither the industry requisite to produce the full proportion of grain, nor the hope necessary to animate his exertions. He knew that the improving condition of his ryots was one grand assurance that his own coffers would be filled ;—he calculated accurately, that he who taxes man's labour beyond his power, will in the end lose all by his vain attempt to grasp too much. He knew, in short, that no Zemindar could prosper in the midst of a starving tenantry.

But Coudiah's life waned apace, and the sun of his days was shortly extinguished. His son succeeded him, as holder of the district ;—but Goupaldoo inherited only the wealth of his father ; no law of inheritance unfortunately can secure the legitimate descent of wisdom,

and often the follies of the child scatter dust on the grave of the parent.

Goupaldoo loved ease better than anything in the world. He had been known to sacrifice to it the indulgence of his darling propensities. To sit on the cushions that covered his verandah, gazing out upon his own broad lands, and enjoying the odour of his kaleean, whilst its bubbling lulled him into dreamy stupor,—was to him the acmé of felicity. To such a man, consequently, a minister—a fac-totum,—a steward—was absolutely necessary; and Kishamah, having passed through various gradations of servitude, finally attained the post of distinction.

Kishamah was as indefatigable as his master was indolent. Keen, astute, ready-witted, he contrived to render every event subservient to his own interest,—an object of which he never for an instant lost sight. The advantages which his position afforded, were by no means thrown away on his perception. He knew well the means of oppression,—of ruin,—within his

power, and the ryots were not long in having this discovery forced on them. Very soon also it was well understood that Kishamah was accessible to a bribe, and that he who could give most largely, might insure a favourable consideration of *his* case, even if justice lay altogether with his opponent. This accessibility led the unfortunate ryots to the commission of frauds and outrages on each other,—to the indulgence of the spirit of litigation so unhappily general amongst the Hindoos,—for every man overlooking the fact, that his adversary might offer a higher bribe than he, believed that he might purchase on all occasions a decision in his own favour. Of course the result was always disappointment to one of the contending parties,—in many instances despair. And it soon became a truth painfully apparent to themselves, that from having been the most prosperous, the happiest, and the most contented cultivators of the whole large district, those in the nearer neighbourhood of the Zemindar were decidedly the most wretched and most unfortunate.

There was *one* dwelling, however, where peace and plenteousness still inhabited. It was the abode of so much pure and deep affection, that it seemed as if every ungentler guest were excluded thence for ever. It stood somewhat apart from the group of cottages belonging to the other villagers ;—it had also rather a broader front, and its walls were freshly chunammed, and its roof was neatly and securely thatched. Its interior arrangements were simple in the extreme ;—it was divided by a mat of the palmira bark, which screened part of it from the eye of the intruder. Its furniture was scanty as the wants of the Hindoo ;—two sleeping cots, with stringes and palumpores, in the inner apartment,—a few cushions, as articles of luxury,—the usual proportion of brass cooking vessels and chatties in the outer, completed the whole of its garniture. Still, comfort—happiness—existed here, for here was an abundant provision for many luxuries compatible with their inartificial habits.

It was the abode of an individual of the Rajpoot caste, who had lately married a girl of his

own tribe. Adjeit Sing possessed a person distinguished for its peculiar strength and beauty, and the loveliness of Tulzah, his bride, made her more than an equal mate for him. They were both orphans, and every separate affection of their hearts seemed gathered into one strong feeling of absolute devotion to each other. Adjeit was a discharged sipahi, and his merits had recommended him to the notice of the late Zemindar, who made him putail of the village. Whether from his own superior skill, or, as the envious said, from his better luck, every thing to which he set his hand prospered. The change of Zemindars had not affected his prosperity. Free from the litigious spirit of his neighbours,—inoffensive, and known to be the possessor of strength and courage to assert his own rights by his own personal prowess,—respected also from the position he held,—he pursued his usual course of harmless existence, unmolested by the most mischievous. Tenderly careful of the comfort of Tulzah, he redoubled his efforts for their common support, and permitted her not to perform any of those labo-

rious offices which were usual to the females of their rank. It was his pride to think, when toiling beneath the mid-day sun, that she was securely sheltered in her shady nest, not injuring her slight frame by drudgery, nor encountering the rude gaze of coarse and vulgar men. Adjeit was, as I have said, a Rajpoot, and to him, therefore, the exposure of his wife was an event to be deprecated and averted by every possible means.

Their habitation stood apart from the village ; indeed it was so shaded by a large tamarind-tree on one side, and by its garden of plantains on the other, that Tulzah was accustomed to seat herself under the shelter of the former, to enjoy the freer breath of the evening-air, and to watch with her husband the retiring light of the yet glorious sun. In these regions the twilight is so short, that there seems no resting-place between day and night ;—but then, to compensate the poet or the man of melancholy for his disappointment, the moon rises so brightly, so beautifully, that he, of this character, who stands in that softly brilliant light, might

well wish it were never to be displaced by the more garish sun. Such a wish was sometimes even pronounced by Tulzah, who had no more poetry than nature usually bestows on the young, and no melancholy save when Adjeit remained absent longer than his wont; and such a wish she uttered one evening when with him she sat beneath the shade of the broad tamarind-tree, watching the last red streaks of the day on one side, and the splendid rising of the moon, perceptible through the opening branches of a tree that lay between Tulzah and the east, on the other.

She had scarcely heard her husband's laughing censure of the absurdity of such a wish, when a piercing shriek burst from her lips, and before Adjeit could ascertain the cause, she had covered her face with her drapery and fled.

That cause was not, however, long unexplained to the startled husband. Standing in the shadow, right opposite to the spot where Tulzah had reclined, Adjeit recognised the

foruns of Goupaldoo, the zemindar, and his prime minister Kishamah.

He wondered *why* they were there; but it was not for him to ask, and they received and returned the usual *salám*, without expecting an inquiry or dreaming of an explanation. But for many hours after they had disappeared he was busied in vain attempts at assigning some probable motive for their presence.

He knew not that the one only stimulus capable of rousing Goupaldoo from his indolence, was his passion for beauty. He knew not that the grace of Tulzah, carefully as she concealed herself from common eyes, was the theme of many. He knew not that he was an object of hatred and jealousy to Kishamah, in whose path of prosperity he appeared as Mordecai appeared to Haman. He knew not, therefore, that his ruin was resolved by one who always tracked his victims to destruction.

A few moons waned, and where was Tulzah? —where was Adjeit? Alas! those moons had shone on scenes of much suffering and degra-

dation! Adjeit had lost his little chieftainship; his cattle had died; his property had been destroyed by invisible means; his house had been burnt down; he had been bribed by Goupaldoo to give him his wife; he, a RAJPOOT, had been bribed—he, of the tribe of the lion—to dishonour his name, to violate his caste, to volunteer for infamy! Bribes, promises, all had been disdainfully rejected, and he pressed his beloved and tearful wife to his heart as he vowed rather to devote her to death.

Tulzah disappeared, and the unhappy husband, desperate and distrustful of all creation, sometimes harboured the suspicion that she had voluntarily deserted him. It was in the silence of the night that he had been bereft, and if violence had attempted such an outrage, would not a shriek,—a cry for rescue from *her* lips,—have roused him from the deepest slumber that ever steeped his senses? And above all, when the rumour of his loss was carried to the zemindar, he had immediately sent out a body of men in all directions to aid in discovering whither Tulzah had been conveyed. *He,*

therefore, was guiltless. He had, moreover, endeavoured to console him with the assurance that he should be restored to his former office, that things might yet wear a better aspect, and offered aid to rebuild his little dwelling. But Adjeit accepted it not : what was his dwelling to him when the light of it was gone ? What could prosperity give, when she, for whose sake it was precious, was removed utterly from his sight ? Oh, no ! All things were hateful to him. He turned with loathing from the cheerfulness of the sun ; he shrank with disgust from the gay flowers he had used to gather for *her*. His food was swallowed hastily and scantily, to satisfy the mere cravings of human nature. His person was neglected ; his beard had grown ever since her disappearance. His features were sharpened,—his eyes sunk,—his cheeks hollow,—his person stooping and lean, and his footsteps feeble. His usual occupations were neglected : his days were spent in a search which became more hopeless every hour ; his nights passed in restless and uneasy sleep, or in unquiet wandering round the neighbourhood.

In short, the villagers, who scarcely understood that the mere loss of a wife was one of such great magnitude, and who were themselves accustomed to endure all the evils of destitution, began to look on him as one under the dominion of an evil spirit.—

It was the deep and dark midnight. The moon in her wane had not yet risen, and though the stars and the planets studded the heavens, the objects of earth were scarcely distinguishable. Adjeit lay under his tamarind-tree, as of old, and he gazed up at the sky as if he reproached it with his woes. Sleepless and disturbed he lay, and his thoughts were with Tulzah, and he deemed himself alone.

But he was *not* alone. There stood near him another human being of small stature and slight form. But he knew it not, until he heard in murmurs, like a whisper—“*Adjeit!*” and he felt that there was but *one* who would *thus* have called on him.

He arose instantly, breathlessly. He saw not his companion, but his out-stretched hand grasped her, and forgetting all his suspicions

in the joy of restoration, he clasped her in his arms, and in a scream of wild exultation, he cried,—“ My Tulzah!—Tulzah!—Leave me no more, oh Tulzah !”

But, disengaging herself, she sank from his arms to his feet, and as she lay prostrate before him, her breast heaved with convulsive sobs, and in accents almost suffocated, she said—“ Embrace me not! own me not! reject me! spurn me, Adjeit! I am polluted, I am defiled, I am become thy shame and thy reproach! Wife meet for thee no more, I have sought thee but to die at thy feet, Adjeit; to tell thee of my dishonour; to animate thee to vengeance; to assure thee, that thy poor Tulzah was torn from thy side, by ruffianly hands, when peaceful slumber was in our dwelling; but oh, what boots it? They have defiled me, Adjeit!—I am vile, worthless, not to be named as thine. Thy wife, thou Rajpoot, hath been dishonoured!”

He raised her forcibly from the earth, and he wildly covered her with kisses. The faint moon rising shone on her altered face, and

told him in bitter signs what the destroyer had inflicted on her. Again and again he embraced her—“Thou wert true!” he cried, “thou wert true, Tulzah!—But thou art dis- honoured, and, Tulzah, thou must die!”

“And for that I sought thee, Adjeit!” she cried, “to tell thee I must die! To tell thee, too, thy Tulzah hath drunk her last drop of life, and tasted the sweetness of revenge! The dog slept securely at my side, and with his own creiss I stabbed him as he lay; within the walls of his own tent, as he despoiled thy roof, was he despoiled. I stabbed him twice, yea, thrice, Adjeit!—thus—thus—thus!”

The weapon had been concealed beneath her drapery, and now he opposed not the dreadful work of death.

“Thou hast spared me a sore task, Tulzah,” said he calmly, as he lay beside her dying form. “In truth, thou hast died bravely; it was well—that thou hast done, is well!”

Beneath the tree he buried the body of Tulzah where it lay. And he arose as the day dawned on the completion of his work, and he

prepared an ample meal, and he ate it greedily. And he departed, and was seen there no more.

A few weeks wore away, and the vile servant of a vile master, Kishamah,—perished as that master had done—by violence. His body was found beneath the tamarind-tree, covered with deep gashes inflicted by a creiss. The murderer was never discovered, and Adjeit was heard of no more. One of the ryots indeed declared, that on the night of the murder, he saw a man precipitate himself into the river where the current was strongest, and he *looked* with the look of Adjeit. But the man's own account was so incoherent, that little credit was attached to it, especially as the moon was on the wane on the night in question. In a short time, the story was remembered only as a village-legend ; and children wandered to the tamarind-tree, and watched a pair of doves on its branches, into which they said the spirits of Adjeit and Tulzah had transmigrated.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





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